Sept. 4, 1978

THE NEW YORKER

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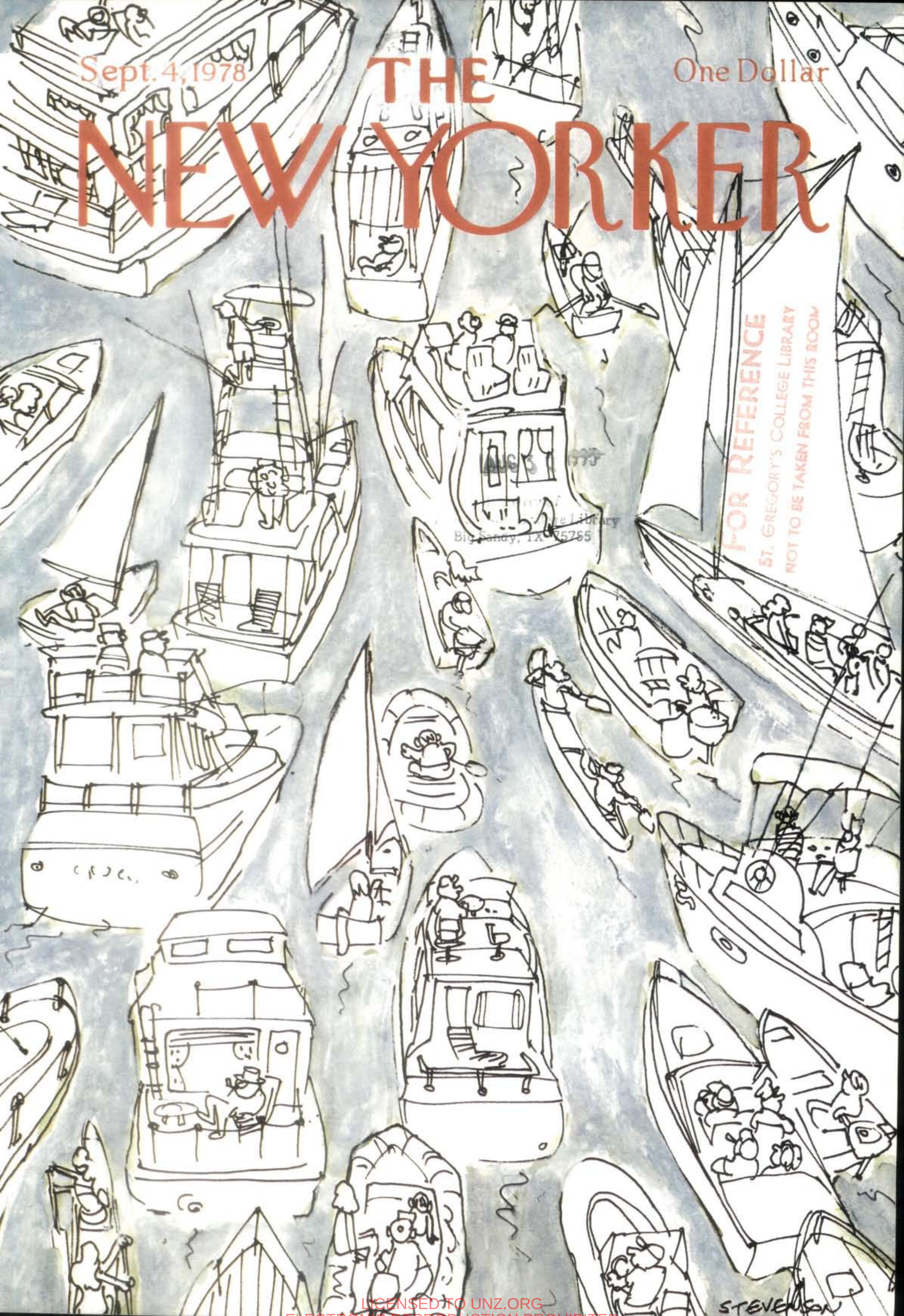

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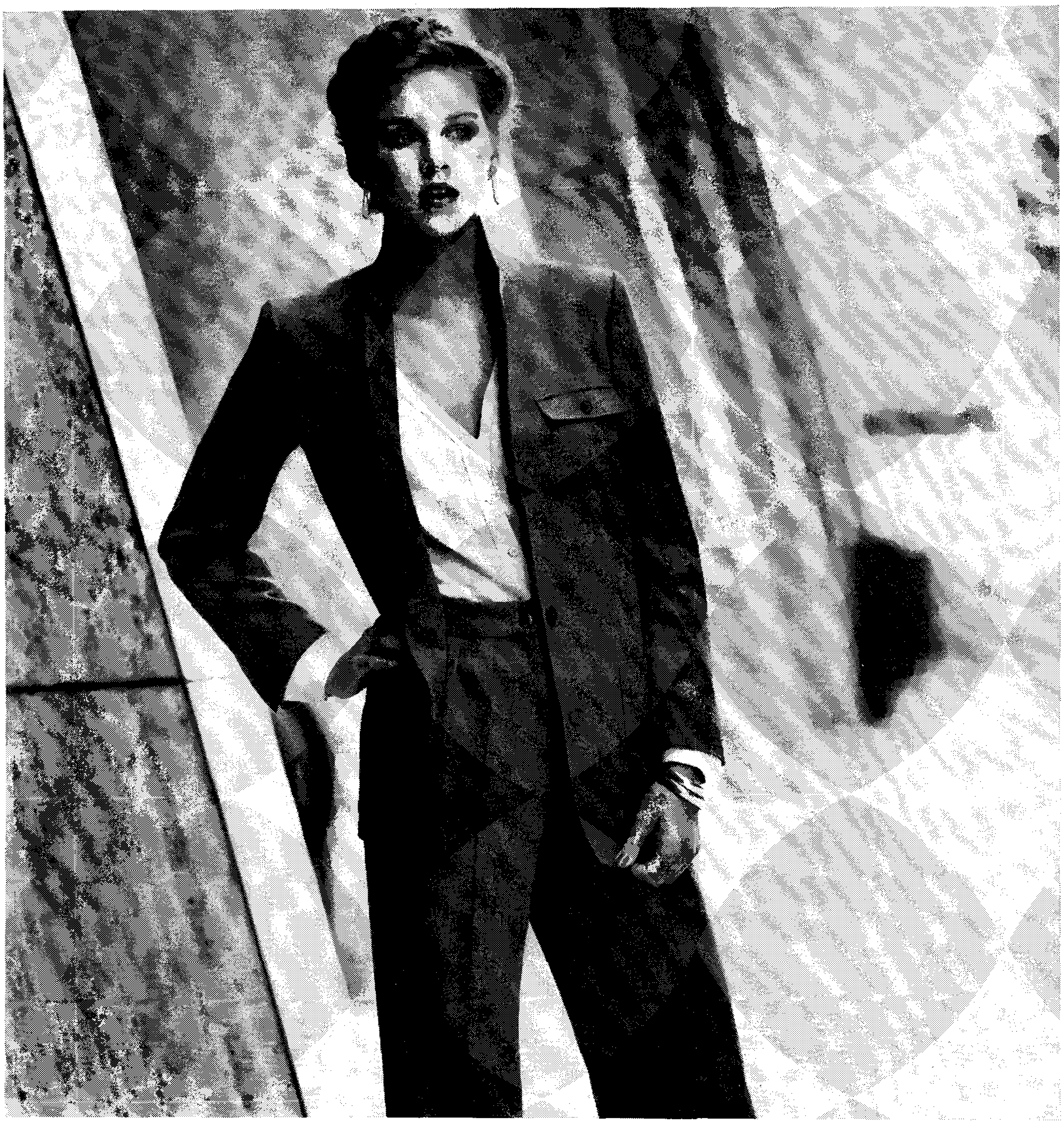

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

A CONSCIENTIOUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			30	31	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9

THE THEATRE

(In the absence of our usual newspapers, you can get ticket and other last-minute information by calling 869-3010.)

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

AIN'T MISBEHAVIN'—A rip-roaring musical tribute to Fats Waller, by a superb small company whose energy would suffice to light Manhattan. (Reviewed in our issue of 5/22/78.) (Longacre, 220 W. 48th St. 246-5639. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

AMERICAN DANCE MACHINE—The title of the show is the name of a refreshing young company, whose purpose is to reproduce, as accurately as possible, the best dances from the best musicals in Broadway history. Under the direction of Lee Theodore, the accomplishment matches the enterprise. (7/3/78) (Century, 235 W. 46th St. 354-6644. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

THE BEST LITTLE WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS—A cheerful, cheering, and foolish musical about a bordello called the Chicken Ranch. Tommy Tune was the choreographer; Carol Hall wrote the score, and Larry L. King and Peter Masterson wrote the libretto. (5/1/78) (46th Street Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. 246-4271. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

DA—In Hugh Leonard's entertaining play, a dramatist, back in Ireland for the funeral of his father, is persistently haunted by the stubborn, funny corpse. Brian Murray is the dramatist, and Barnard Hughes his late Da, and both are in top form. (3/27/78) (Morosco, 217 W. 45th St. 246-6230. Nightly, except Sundays and Labor Day, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2; special matinée Labor Day at 3.)

DANCIN'—An assortment of vivid production numbers on unrelated themes. Bob Fosse is the choreographer, and his company of dancers is dazzling. The music is by Bach, Sousa, George M. Cohan, and other classic composers. (4/10/78) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 247-0472. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

DEATHTRAP—A thriller whose clever anfractuosities of plot are just frightening enough and just funny enough to make a marvellous evening in the theatre. (3/13/78) (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 246-4636. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

FAMILY BUSINESS—A wealthy old Jewish manufacturer dies of a heart attack at the end of Act I, and the two remaining acts are given over to his grown sons' squabbles and quarrels over money and other matters. (4/24/78) (Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St., near Astor Pl. 254-4370. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

THE 5TH OF JULY—A number of former activists of the nineteen-sixties and their friends gather at a farm in Missouri in 1977 for various purposes. Lanford Wilson is an experienced dramatist, but this is one of his non-vintage plays. The performance is very good, though. (5/8/78) (Circle Repertory Company Theatre, 99 Seventh Ave. S., at Sheridan Square. 924-7100. Tuesdays through Fridays, except Sept. 1, at 8, and Saturdays and Friday, Sept. 1, at 7 and 10.)

I'M GETTING MY ACT TOGETHER AND TAKING IT ON THE ROAD—A night-club singer with strong feminist views celebrates her thirty-ninth birthday by auditioning her new act for her dismayed manager. This musical by Nancy Ford (score) and Gretchen Cryer (book and lyrics)—the remarkable team who wrote "The Last Sweet Days of Isaac" in 1970—is disappointing for a number of reasons, but it has its compensations all the same, among them the tuneful songs and the mockery and self-mockery of some of the words. Word Baker was the capable director. (6/26/78) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 677-6350. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 6:30 and 9; and Sundays at 8. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

ON THE TWENTIETH CENTURY—A curiously musty musical version of the old Hecht-MacArthur comedy. Book and lyrics by Betty Comden and Adolph Green, music by Cy Coleman. (3/6/78) (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 398-0280. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

PIANO BAR—A small musical, lightly disguised as cabaret, about two men and two women who enter a bar as strangers and leave, after a couple of hours, as friends and lovers. Music by Rob Fremont, lyrics by Doris Willens, and libretto by both. (6/19/78) (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Wednesdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

PINS AND NEEDLES—A revival of Harold Rome's 1937 musical revue. (Roundabout Stage One, 333 W. 23rd St. 924-7160. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 2.)

PLAYERS—Fred Gwynne and Rex Robbins head the all-male cast of a comedy by David Williamson. Directed by Michael Blakemore. Previews through Tuesday, Sept. 5. Opens officially on Wednesday, Sept. 6. (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 582-3897. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8; opening-night curtain at 6:45. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

P. S. YOUR CAT IS DEAD!—A (rewritten) revival of a play by James Kirkwood. (4/3/78) (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

PUSHING THIRTY—An entertainment conceived and performed by Jonathan Hadary. (Circle Repertory Company Theatre, 99 Seventh Ave. S., at Sheridan Sq. 924-7100. Final performances Wednesday and Thursday, Aug. 30-31, at 11.)

RIDICULOUS THEATRICAL COMPANY—Four Charles Ludlam productions. **STAGE BLOOD:** Wednesday, Aug. 30, at 8. . . . **CORN:** Mondays and Wednesday, Sept. 6, at 8. . . . **BLUEBEARD:** Thursdays and Fridays at 8. . . . **CAMILLE:** Saturdays and Sundays at 8. (One Sheridan Square. 260-7137.)

RUNAWAYS—Elizabeth Swados' musical about the plight of runaway children in this city is, paradoxically, quite exhilarating. The members of the cast, most of them unknown, range in age from eleven to their early twenties. (3/20/78) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 730-1760. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

TIMBUKTU!—Gorgeous costumes and sets, many lithe dancers, and the silliest book in the

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25 WEST 43RD STREET, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10036
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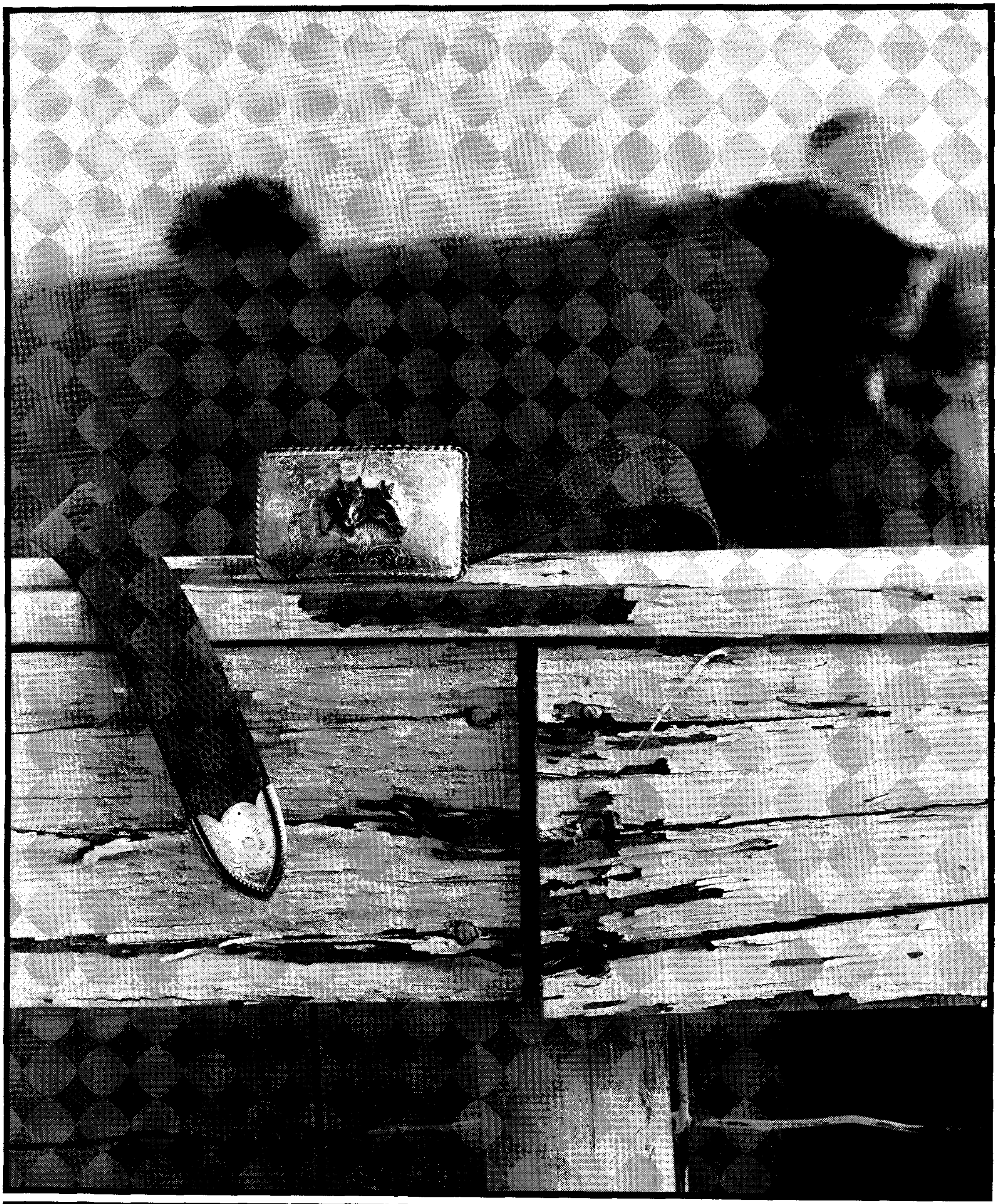
THE NEW YORKER, published weekly by The New Yorker Magazine, Inc., 25 West 43rd St., New York, N.Y. 10036; Peter F. Fleischmann, chairman; George J. Green, president; William P. Buxton, Milton Greenstein, and Sam R. Spoto, vice-presidents; J. Kennard Bosee, treasurer; Elaine M. Matteo, secretary. Branch advertising offices: 111 East Wacker Drive, Chicago, Ill. 60601; 155 Montgomery St., San Francisco, Calif. 94104; 523 West Sixth St., Los Angeles, Calif. 90014; 1175 Peachtree St. N. E., Atlanta, Ga. 30361; 8 Arlington St., Boston, Mass. 02116; 21 Grosvenor St., London, W1X OED. Vol. LIV, No. 29, September 4, 1978. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. Authorized as second-class mail by the Post Office Department, Ottawa, Canada, and for payment of postage in cash. © 1978 by The New Yorker Magazine, Inc., in the United States and Canada. All rights reserved. No part of this periodical may be reproduced without the consent of The New Yorker. Printed in U.S.A. Subscription rates: In U.S. and possessions, one year, $24.00; two years, $40.00. In Canada and Mexico, one year, $28.00. Other foreign, $32.00.



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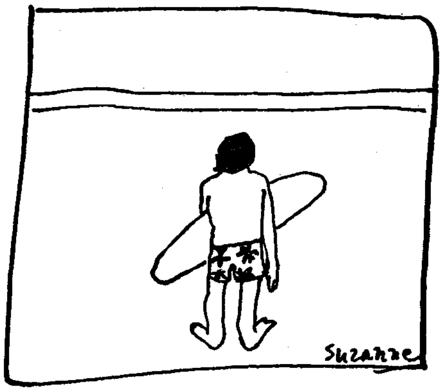
GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

world. With Eartha Kitt. (3/13/78) (Mark Hellinger, 237 W. 51st St. 757-7064. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, Sept. 10.)

TRIBUTE—A comedy by Bernard Slade upon an unlikely subject—the attempt of a dying man to establish an affectionate relationship with a priggish son. Jack Lemmon, in the leading role, gives an extraordinary performance. (6/26/78) (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 245-3430. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

LONG RUNS—ANNIE: Daddy Warbucks is transformed into a benign New Dealer, and Little Orphan Annie is not very waiflike in this pleasant but uninspired musical. (Alvin, 250 W. 52nd St. 757-8646. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)... **CHAPTER TWO:** Neil Simon specializes in couples, some of which are odder than others. The two couples in this rueful comedy are full of troubles, which pass while being joked about. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 265-4311. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)... **A CHORUS LINE:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 246-5990. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)... **DRACULA:** The five-hundred-year-old count from Transylvania never looked rosier. Frank Langella heads a competent cast, and the lovely, creepy sets and costumes are by Edward Gorey. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-6363. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)... **THE FANTASTICKS:** 7,624 performances so far. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)... **GEMINI:** In Albert Innaurato's delightful comedy, a Harvard undergraduate, son of an Italian-American laborer, is paid a surprise visit by a pair of his classmates—a well-to-do brother and sister from Cambridge—and is thrown into a panic that at first appears to be social but is actually sexual. With Danny Aiello as the father, and Barbara Coggin and Jonathan Hadary, among other good actors. (Little Theatre, 240 W. 44th St. 221-6425. Nightly, except Sundays and Tuesday, Sept. 5, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2; special matinée Labor Day at 3.)... **THE GIN GAME:** An often hilarious comedy about the misery of life in an old people's home. Sounds implausible, but D. L. Coburn performs the feat with ease. The cast consists of Jessica Tandy and E. G. Marshall. Starting Tuesday, Sept. 5, Maureen Stapleton will replace Miss Tandy. (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 246-6742. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)... **GREASE:** A musical that parodies, by faithful imitation, the songs and dances of the nineteen-fifties. (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 245-5760. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)... **I LOVE MY WIFE:** A mild musical examination of the sexual revolution in Trenton. Cy Coleman wrote the score. (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 246-0390. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)... **THE KING AND I:** Yul Brynner is incandescent in this admirable revival of the Rodgers-Hammerstein musical. (Uris, 51st St. west of Broadway. 586-6510. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)... **THE MAGIC SHOW:** A wretched musical, but the magic tricks make up for it all. (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 489-6392. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 2.)... **MUMMENSCHANZ:** A merry evening of pantomime with three masked players. The masks are ingenious and surprising, and so are the ideas of this nimble troupe. (Bijou, 209 W. 45th St. 221-8500. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)... **OH! CALCUTTA!:** A collection of short sketches that purport to give us a refreshing view of sex and do not. (Edison, 240 W. 47th St. 757-7164. Mondays through Fridays except Thursday, Sept. 7, at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 9:30. Matinée Wednesday, Aug. 30, at 2.)... **THE PASSION OF DRACULA:** An unpretentious, entertaining adaptation (in the British manner) of Bram Stoker's old thriller. Bob Hall and David Richmond are the adapters. Peter Bennett is the commendable director. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 8. Matinées Sundays at 3.)... **SAME TIME, NEXT YEAR:** Bernard Slade has invented an Erector set of one-liners that should last a lifetime. With Betsy Palmer and Charles Kimbrough, directed by Gene Saks. (Ambassador, 215 W. 49th St. 541-6490. Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday at 8. Matinées Wednesday and Saturday at 2, and Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, Sept. 3.)... **VANITIES:** In three acts, three Southern high-school girl cheerleaders change from all but identical "best friends" (1963) into quite different and incompatible New Yorkers (1974), in this amusing and gently ironic comedy by Jack Heifner. (Downstairs at the Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Wednesdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)... **THE WIZ:** An all-black production of a musical version of "The Wizard of Oz," with gorgeous scenery and costumes, tiresome music, and several first-rate performances. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. CI 7-7260. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)



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MISCELLANY

BEATLEMANIA—A multimedia and live-music program about the sixties, with four musicians doing thirty-seven songs written by John Lennon, Paul McCartney, and George Harrison. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 245-4878. Tuesdays, except Sept. 5, through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2; special matinées Wednesday, Aug. 30, and Labor Day at 2, and Sunday, Sept. 3, at 5.)

DANCE

AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE—Opening performances of a two-week engagement that will run through Sunday, Sept. 17—Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, Sept. 5-6: "The Sleeping Beauty."... ¶ Thursday evening, Sept. 7: "La Bayadère," an excerpt from Act II of "Swan Lake," "Pas de Deux," and Act II of "La Sylphide," all with Ivan Nagy.... ¶ Friday and Saturday evenings, Sept. 8-9: "Giselle." (Metropolitan Opera House. 580-9830. Evenings at 8.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town.... ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

ALI'S ALLEY, 77 Greene St., between Spring and Broome Sts. (226-9042)—Several notches above your simple, basic SoHo jazz loft in its amenities and in the consistent quality of the musicians who perform here. Tenor saxophonist **CLIFFORD JORDAN** will lead a quintet beginning Tuesday, Sept. 5, when the club reopens. Music from ten.

BALLROOM, 458 West Broadway, between Houston and Prince Sts. (673-9121)—On SoHo's main drag. Singers David Summers and Nedra Dixon are performing a cabaret act that is more like a mini-musical. Shows are at eight-thirty and ten-thirty Tuesdays through Saturdays. Dining.

BEEFSTEAK CHARLIE'S, 55 Fifth Ave., at 12th St. (675-4720)—The music corner here is in the sidewalk picture window, so you can check out the musicians on your way in. Pianist **RONNIE MATTHEWS** works with a trio through Saturday, Sept. 2; Wednesday through Saturday, Sept. 6-9, trumpeter Shunzo Ono will be present with his quartet. Music from nine until two Wednesdays and Thursdays, and from ten on Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Here's a partial lineup: on Thursday, Aug. 31, the Good Rats, a cheerful, exuberant rock ensemble, will perform; Friday and Saturday, Sept. 1-2, belong to Dexter Wansel and his Philadelphia-soul band, Mars; on Monday and Tuesday, Sept. 4-5, **JOHNNY WINTER,** the wild blues singer and guitarist from Texas, will be present; on Wednesday, Sept. 6, country singer Ronnie Milsap will drop by; on Thursday, Sept. 7, Leon Redbone will sing and play guitar on blues and ragtime from the twenties; and Friday and Saturday, Sept. 8-9, have been reserved for vibraharpist Gary Burton's quartet. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays at nine and midnight. Dining.

BRADLEY'S, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A narrow ground-floor town-house bar with a concert-hall-sized clientele. The music is nearly always fine, but sometimes it's hard to get close enough to hear it. Pianist **JOHN BUNCH** teams up with bassist **SAM JONES** through Saturday, Sept. 2; Sunday, Sept. 3, will belong to house favorite **JIMMY ROWLES**; and starting Monday, Sept. 4, pianist **JOANNE BRACKEEN** will perform with bassist **EDDIE GOMEZ** for six nights. Music from ten most nights, from nine-thirty on Sundays. Dining.

CACHAÇA, 403 E. 62nd St. (688-8501)—An elegant second-floor night club that seems to overlook Rio, Corcovado, and the outlying suburbs—it's all done with cleverly angled mirrored walls that reflect small electric lamps placed around the room. One can listen while sitting on light-gray couches or dance to live Brazilian jazz performed by a trio and a vocalist (after eleven). Before eleven and between sets, there is recorded American and Brazilian disco music and Carnival music. The club is open Tuesdays through Sundays from eight to four. Dining.

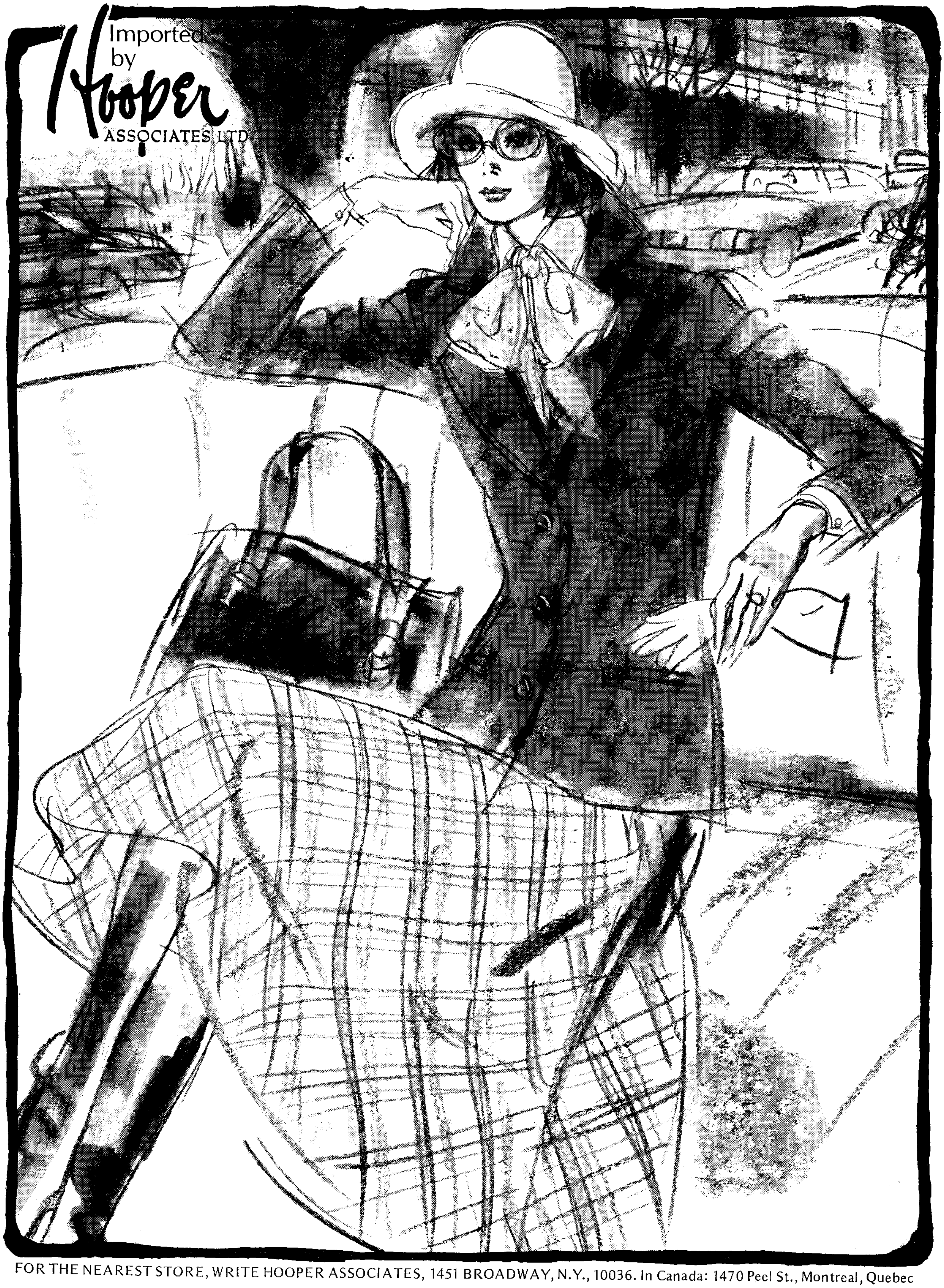
CAFÉ CARLYLE, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (RH 4-1600)—Pianist Monty Alexander plays crescendos with his trio Wednesday and Thursday, Aug. 30-31, and Monday through Saturday, Sept. 4-9. Sets begin at nine-forty-five and eleven-thirty. Dining.

CAFÉ PIERRE, in the Pierre Hotel, Fifth Ave. at 61st St. (838-8000)—Guitarist **BUCKY PIZZARELLI** will be in charge of a trio beginning Tuesday, Sept. 5. Music from eight-thirty to twelve-thirty. Dining and dancing.

CARNEGIE TAVERN, 165 W. 56th St. (PL 7-9522)—**ELLIS LARKINS** is here, playing the great August Förster piano with driving serenity. He does everything in his power to stay out of the listener's way, and he does everything in his power to swing. Weeknights from eight until midnight. Dining.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—The audiences look preppier and preppier every week, but onstage affectedly sinister young musicians—dark glasses, torn T-shirts, leather jackets, and smirking expressions—continue to pound out punk rock, which is for the most part mid-sixties (and in some cases mid-fifties) rock that has come

Casual but not unplanned, the artful encounter of two 100% "Valora" wool knits that lead separate lives: a spirited brief jacket and compatible bias plaid skirt by **bleyle**—their natural affinities heightened by a color-cued, bow-scarfed blouse of woven polyester.



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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

around again on the guitar. Nightly from nine-thirty. Monday is showcase night.

Cookery, 21 University Pl., at 8th St. (OR 4-4450)—**JOE TURNER,** a first-edition stride pianist—he's in his early seventies and was a contemporary of Fats Waller and other Harlem players fifty years ago—winds up his visit on Saturday, Sept. 2. On Tuesday, Sept. 5, the legendary blues singer **ALBERTA HUNTER,** who is in her eighties and still going strong—and who isn't merely good for someone in her eighties; she's good, period—will return. Pianist Gerald Cook and bassist Jimmy Lewis will assist her. Sundays, **ROSE MURPHY** sings her thirty-and-more-year-old hits "I Can't Give You Anything But Chichi" and "Button Up Your Chichichi," with support from bassist Morris Edwards. Music weeknights at eight-thirty, ten-thirty, and midnight, and Sundays from eight to one. Dining.

Crawdaddy, Vanderbilt Ave. at 45th St. (687-1860)—The white tiled floors echo the conversation in this sprawling place, and it's sometimes hard to hear the music. Trombonist George Masso leads a trio Mondays through Fridays. Music from six-thirty to eleven-thirty. Dining.

Eddie Condon's, 144 W. 54th St. (265-8277)—Bobby Gordon, Vic Dickenson, Jim Andrews, Connie Kay, Red Balaban (who owns the place), and **WILD BILL DAVISON** are the traditionalists who usually make up the house band. On Sunday, Sept. 3, guitarist **CHRIS FLORY** will lead a quintet from eight-thirty. The music begins weeknights after nine-thirty. Dining.

Gregory's, 1149 First Ave., at 63rd St. (371-2220)—Pianist **HOD O'BRIEN** works Wednesdays through Sundays with admirable sidemen, guitarist **JOE PUMA** and bassist **FRANK LUTHER,** and a conscientious vocalist, Alicia Sherman. Their hours are ten to three; on Sundays, Mr. O'Brien and Miss Sherman start out at seven. Mondays, from ten to three, **AL HAIG, MORRIS EDWARDS,** and **AL GAFA** perform piano-bass-guitar bebop variations; on Tuesdays, from ten to three, guitarist **CHUCK WAYNE** leads a trio. Weeknights from seven to ten are given over to pianist Loumell Morgan and bassist Morris Edwards.

Hopper's, 452 Sixth Ave., at 11th St. (260-0250)—Toots Thielemans plays laid-back virtuoso harmonica in jazzy settings with a quartet that includes a wonderful young drummer, Joe La Barbara, and a moving pianist, Phil Marcowitz, through Saturday, Sept. 2. On Monday, Sept. 4, saxophonist Eddie Daniels will bring in his quartet. Shows Mondays through Thursdays at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty; Fridays and Saturdays at nine-thirty, eleven-thirty, and one. No music Sundays.

Jimmy Ryan's, 154 W. 54th St. (664-9700)—**ROY ELDRIDGE,** the resident legend, performs with assistance from drummer Eddie Locke, pianist Johnny Morris, bassist Ted Sturgis, trombonist Bobby Pratt, and clarinettist Clarence Hutchenrider. On Mondays, Max Kaminsky heads the group. Music weeknights from nine-thirty to three. On Sundays, Kaminsky directs another group of musical archivists from eight until two.

Lone Star Café, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—Excellent non-anemic Tex-Mex chili. Kinky Friedman, a singer, guitarist, and not-ready-for-prime-time songwriter and humorist who passes himself off as a Jewish Texas cowboy, has appeared at this club frequently and attracted large audiences, and his already substantial cult is still growing. Mr. Friedman has apparently pulled it all together—it being folk music, country-and-Western music, and bad taste. He's here again on Wednesday and Thursday, Aug. 30-31. Nashville fiddler **VASSAR CLEMENTS** will drop in with his band on Tuesday, Sept. 5. Music weeknights, except Labor Day, from nine-fifteen to three, and Sundays from eight-thirty to two.

Les Mareyeurs, 998 Madison Ave., at 77th St. (628-3333)—Singer **BARBARA LEA** is here with an accompanist through Saturday, Sept. 2; on Tuesday, Sept. 5, **RONNY WHYTE,** a straight-arrow baritone and a good pianist, and bassist **JACK SIX** will return to the bar of this restaurant. Tuesdays through Saturdays from eight-thirty to one.

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Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—Clarinettist and saxophonist **EDDIE BAREFIELD,** trumpeter Dick Vance, and bassist Beverly Peer, who all played in the Chick Webb orchestra a few decades back, are playing together again here. They didn't get Ella Fitzgerald (the authentic Chick Webb thrush) but they did get **CAROL SLOANE,** who sang with Les and Larry Elgart and who, on occasion, sounds a lot like Ella. Saxophonist Norris Tierney and drummer Panama Francis round out the group, which performs Tuesdays through Saturdays from nine-fifteen. On Mondays, from nine-thirty to midnight, Woody Allen comes and goes, talking of Lorenzo Tio. Dining. Closed Sundays.

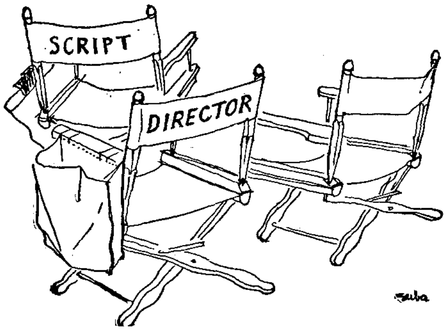
Mikell's, 760 Columbus Ave., at 97th St. (864-8832)—Reopens Tuesday, Sept. 5. A crowded and animated upper West Side music bar that draws rhythm-and-blues, jazz-rock, disco-funk, and, sometimes, jazz bands. Drummer **ART BLAKEY** and his latest crop of **JAZZ MESSENGERS** will deliver their durable bebop messages Thursday through Saturday, Sept. 7-9. Music from ten until two. Dining.

Other End, 149 Bleecker St. (673-7030)—In a city chock-full of cabarets, this club stands out as the best of the last of the sixties Village coffeehouses. The intimacy and the fine sight lines to the stage—and even the brick walls—haven't changed, but the club now has a liquor license, and brings in non-folkie performers now and then. Singers and guitarists **ARTIE TRAUM** and **PAT ALGER** and Nashville-style-guitar scholar **ARLEN ROTH**—who usually appear here as a portion of the Woodstock Mountain Revue, a loosely affiliated group of Catskill musicians—will perform Thursday through Saturday, Aug. 31-Sept. 2. Thursday through Saturday, Sept. 7-9, will be given over to **DOUG SAHM,** a singer, songwriter, guitarist, fiddler, and rock-and-roll recluse from Texas who manages to combine the best of country-and-Western, rockabilly, and blues music in his own distinctively rangy and appealing style. Shows most nights at nine and eleven-thirty, on Fridays and Saturdays at nine and midnight. Snacks.

Rainbow Room, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (PL 7-9090)—What a room, what a view! The **SY OLIVER** orchestra soars Tuesdays through Thursdays from seven to one, Fridays and Saturdays from eight to two, and Sundays from six to midnight. Dining and dancing.

Reno Sweeney, 126 W. 13th St. (691-0900)—Don't be put off by the new blue-plastic-tufted walls in the foyer—it's still a nice place. On Tuesday, Sept. 5, **LEE HORWIN,** a talented young singer with a startlingly deep, rich voice, will begin a five-night stay. Shows at nine and eleven-thirty. Mondays are usually showcase nights. Dining.

Seventh Avenue South, 21 Seventh Ave., S., at Leroy St. (242-4694)—What do successful studio musicians do with their profits? Well, some buy fast cars, and some order Doc Severinson outfits. Randy and Mike Brecker, who are brothers and who are sought after for their trumpet and saxophone skills, respectively, opened this pleasant club (along with a third partner) a few weeks ago, and their growing clientele must make them glad they didn't opt for sequin-studded jeans. Saxophonist Robin Kenyatta leads his quartet through Sunday, Sept. 3. Music from ten to two nightly. Dining.



Sibi, 151 E. 50th St. (753-3429)—**BOBBY COLE,** a pianist with a sure, subtle touch and a singer with a hoarse, raspy voice, is found upstairs, in a quiet, formal room far from the Vegas-style doings on the first floor. Mondays through Thursdays at ten-thirty and twelve-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays at ten, twelve, and one-thirty.

StoryTowne, 41 E. 58th St. (755-1640)—Right now, this huge square downstairs room belongs to vocalist **AL HIBBLER** and his backup crew. They're here Thursdays through Saturdays from about nine.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—Saxophonist **DAVE LIEBMAN** leads a quintet through Saturday, Sept. 2; on Sunday and Monday, Sept. 3-4, Double Image, a quartet co-piloted by two vibraharpists—David Samuels and David Friedman—will provide the music; and on Tuesday, Sept. 5, pianist **HAL GALPER** will come in with bassist **MIROSLAV VITOUS** and drummer **BILLY HART** for five nights. Music from about nine-thirty. Dining.

Trax, 100 W. 72nd St., near Columbus Ave. (799-1448)—Reopens Tuesday, Sept. 5. Seventy-second Street may not be Laurel Canyon Boulevard, but this showcase club features a *lot* of West Coast-influenced rock bands every night except Sunday, usually at midnight and two. Dining.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (AL 5-4037)—Alto saxophonist and searing blues singer **EDDIE (CLEANHEAD) VINSON** is here with his quartet doing "They Call Me Mister Cleanhead," "Alimony Blues," and his other wonderful blues classics through Sunday, Sept. 3. On Tuesday, Sept. 5, pianist **SIR ROLAND HANNA,** who was knighted by the President of Liberia a few years ago, will move in with flutist **FRANK WESS** and the rest of the New York Jazz Quartet. On Mondays, the **THAD JONES-MEL LEWIS** big band blasts forth. Music from ten.

West Boondock, 114 Tenth Ave., at 17th St. (929-9645)—Outside: dark, lonely streets and hundreds of parked semis. Inside: a cheerful bar and reputable soul-food restaurant with anachronistic sawdust on the floor. Another asset is pianist Sonelius Smith, who plays "Nature Boy," "Over the Rainbow," Red Garland's version of "Billy Boy," and other selections in a tongue-in-cheek variety of overlapping styles—he can coast like a cocktail pianist or noodle like Keith Jarrett or attack like Cecil Taylor. He is usually here Mondays through Wednesdays; Harris Simon is here Thursdays through Sundays. Music from eight until two.

West End Café, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—This Columbia-student habitat also lures in famous swing musicians. Wednesday and Thursday, Aug. 30-31, the **COUNTSMEN,** a quintet headed by ex-Basie-ites **EARLE WARREN** and **DICKY WELLS,** will perform; and on Friday, Sept. 1, tenor saxophonist George Kelly's Jazz Sultans will take over. Music from nine.

JAZZ/FOLK/ROCK CONCERTS, PERSONAL APPEARANCES, ETC.

Boston—Madison Square Garden, Eighth Ave. between 31st and 33rd Sts. 564-4400. Wednesday, Aug. 30, at 8.

Teddy Pendergrass and **Linda Clifford**—Avery Fisher Hall. TR 4-2424. Thursday, Aug. 31, and Saturday, Sept. 2, at 8, and Friday, Sept. 1, at 8 and 11:30.

Yes—Madison Square Garden. Wednesday through Saturday, Sept. 6-9, at 8.

Paul Winter Consort and **Bridget St. John**—Carnegie Hall. CI 7-7459. Saturday, Sept. 9, at 8.

A Salute to Great American Songwriters—Free concerts in the Atrium of the Citicorp Center, Lexington Ave. at 53rd St.—Wednesday and Thursday, Aug. 30-31, at 6: Dick Sudhalter, Barbara Lea, and others in a salute to Hoagy Carmichael. . . . ¶ Tuesday through Thursday, Sept. 5-7, at 6: Helen Merrill, with the Al Haig Trio, in a salute to George Gershwin.

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Mondays through Fridays from around 10 or

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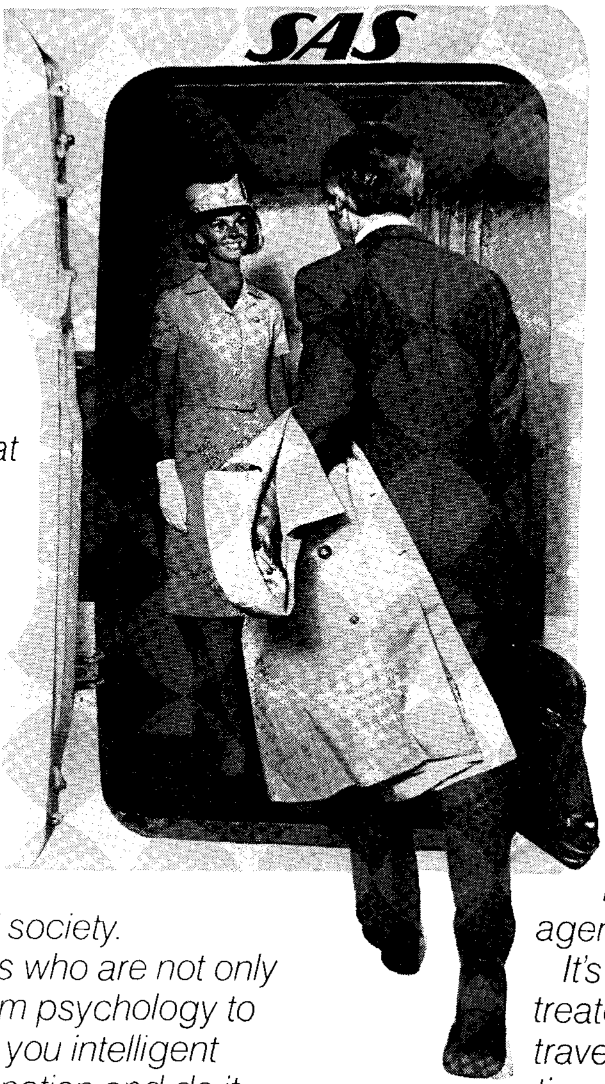

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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11 to between 5 and 6. They will be closed Labor Day.)

GALLERIES

Louis I. Kahn (1901-74)—Early architectural sketches, together with later drawings in pastel, pen-and-ink, charcoal, watercolor, and pencil, made during his travels in Europe and Egypt. Through Saturday, Sept. 9. (The Drawing Center, 137 Greene St. Open daily, except Sundays, and Wednesday evenings until 8.)

Group Shows—At the **Genesis**, 41 E. 57th St.: Works by twenty gallery members. Through Friday, Sept. 1. . . . **Gimpel**, 1040 Madison Ave., at 79th St.: Paintings and sculptures by Natkin, Davie, Hepworth, and others associated with the gallery. Through Sept. 15. . . . **Hoffman**, 429 West Broadway: Gallery artists showing paintings, drawings, and constructions. Through Sept. 14. (Tuesdays through Fridays, 11 to 4.) . . . **Midtown**, 11 E. 57th St.: The gallery group here includes Ethel Magafan, Julien Binford, Isabel Bishop, Robert Sivard. Through Saturday, Sept. 9.

PHOTOGRAPHY

American Photography Since 1960—The shift in photography from the documentary to the expressionistic, from the public event to the private is the basis for an exhibition of about two hundred works mounted by the Museum of Modern Art. Close to a hundred photographers are represented. See below, under "Museums," for dates and times.

International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St.—A hundred and twenty-five prints that **Edward Weston** gave to his sister, Mary Weston Seaman, over a period of years. . . . ¶ Another show, "The Great West, Real/Ideal," includes such diverse works as Betty Hahn's color-screen prints of the Lone Ranger and Tonto, Ansel Adams' sharp-focus wilderness scenes, and Geoff Winningham's pictures of plastic culture in Houston. Through Sunday, Sept. 3. (Open daily.)

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"Images of Women: Master Drawings of Five Centuries" has ninety works (from the Lehman Collection) by artists who include Dürer, Ingres, Menzel, Valadon, and Matisse. Through Oct. 1. . . . ¶ A show of engravings by Abraham Bosse which record the social customs of seventeenth-century Paris. Through Oct. 29. (Open daily except Mondays. Caution: some galleries are open on only a rotating basis. Hours in general: Tuesdays, 10 to 8:45; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 4:45; Sundays, 11 to 4:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—Ninety portrait drawings, impromptu for the most part, of twentieth-century artists and writers. Through Sept. 24. . . . ¶ An exhibit of etchings by Jim Dine. Through Tuesday, Sept. 5. . . . **Photography**: Group show of contemporary American photographers. Through Oct. 2. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.) . . . **Note**: The museum's sculpture garden, 8 W. 54th St., will be open, free, Friday through Sunday, Sept. 1-3, from 6 to 10, for the final times this season. Paul Dunkel will conduct the Philharmonia CETA Orchestra on Friday and Saturday at 8.

Guggenheim Museum, 1071 Fifth Ave., at 89th St.—A selection of nearly two hundred works by the Dutch printmaker Hendrick Nicolaas Werkman. Through Sept. 17. . . . ¶ Forty-five paintings and sculptures, chiefly by Europeans, from the Evelyn Sharp Collection. Through Oct. 1. (Open daily. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, and Labor Day, 11 to 5.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St.—"Art About Art" is a lighthearted exhibition that demonstrates how American artists (from Warhol to Grooms and back again) appropriate the works of others for their own purposes—sometimes in homage and sometimes as a starting point but more often in fun. Through Sept. 24. . . . ¶ An exhibit of more than a hundred twentieth-century drawings acquired by the museum during the past five years, by artists such as Chuck Close, Claes Oldenburg, Georgia O'Keeffe, and Ad Reinhardt. Through Oct. 1. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Through Friday, Sept. 1, from 2 to 9; thereafter, the museum resumes its fall schedule—Tuesdays, 11 to 9, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Whitney Downtown Museum, 55 Water St., two blocks south of Wall St.—An exhibition of collages that has as its earliest example a 1920 Joseph Stella and as its most recent example a work by Ray Johnson made seven years ago. Through Friday, Sept. 8. (Open Mondays, except Labor Day, through Fridays, 11 to 3.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—Fifty-four Haitian artists (most of them self-taught) are represented in an exhibition of paintings and sculptures whose themes are taken from indigenous culture and history. Starts Saturday, Sept. 2. . . . ¶ The Archer Collection of Pahari miniatures consists of eighty paintings of the seventeenth century to the nineteenth, many of them portraits of maharajas and illustrations of religious epics. Through Sept. 17. (Open Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5; Labor Day, 1 to 5.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—An exhibit called "Ice Age Art," installed in a gallery on the third floor, contains prehistoric implements and a rock engraving as well as replicas of carvings done as early as 35,000 B.C. and photomurals of cave paintings at Altamira and Lascaux. (Open daily. Hours: Weekdays, 10 to 4:45, and Wednesday evenings until 9; Sundays and Labor Day, 11 to 5.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—"Embroidery Through the Ages," a show of textiles reaching back to the fourteenth century, taken from the museum's collection or on loan from the Musée des Arts Décoratifs. Through Sunday, Sept. 3. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St.—An exhibit of bronze statuettes attributed to the Renaissance sculptor Severo da Ravenna. All but five of the seventeen pieces are on loan. Through Oct. 8. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

Museum of American Folk Art, 49 W. 53rd St.—A show of traditional folk-art objects whose dominant motif is the heart. Through Oct. 15. (Open daily, except Mondays, 10:30 to 5:30.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—"Patrons & Publishers: The Economics of English Literature" is the theme of an exhibit of letters, manuscripts, and early editions from the Berg Collection. (Open daily, except Thursdays, Sundays, and Labor Day, 10 to 6.)

MUSIC

New York City Opera—Opening performances of a special two-week engagement of Victor Herbert's "Naughty Marietta," after which the company will go into repertory and continue through Sunday, Nov. 12. There will be alternating casts: Gianna Rolandi, Joanna Simon, Jacque Trussel, and Alan Titus, or Elizabeth Hynes, Susanne Marsee, Howard Hensel, and Charles Roe. Conducted variously by John Mauceri, Lloyd Walser, and Brian Salesky. (New York State Theatre, Lincoln Center. 877-4727. Thursday, Aug. 31, at 7:30; Friday, Sept. 1, at 8; Saturday, Sept. 2, at 2 and 8; Sunday, Sept. 3, at 1 and 7; Wednesday, Sept. 6, at 2 and 8; Thursday and Friday, Sept. 7-8, at 8; and Saturday, Sept. 9, at 2 and 8.)

Edward Lieber—Piano. (Bruno Walter Auditorium, New York Public Library at Lincoln Center, 111 Amsterdam Ave., at 65th St. Wednesday, Sept. 6, at 4. For information about free tickets, call AT 9-4908.)

Robert Miller—Piano. (Carnegie Recital Hall. CI 7-7459. Saturday, Sept. 9, at 2.)

IN THE COUNTRY

Tanglewood Festival—Final performances of the season—Friday, Sept. 1, at 7: Gordon Lightfoot. . . . ¶ Sunday, Sept. 3, at 7: George Benson. (Lenox, Mass. For information about tickets, call 977-9020, in New York.)

Saratoga Performing Arts Center—Final performances of the season—Wednesday, Aug. 30, at 8:15: Neil Sedaka. . . . ¶ Thursday, Aug. 31, at 8:15: Gordon Lightfoot. . . . ¶ Friday, Sept. 1, at 8:15: Liza Minnelli. . . . ¶ Saturday, Sept. 2, at 7: Merle Haggard, Larry Gatlin, and Jeanne Pruett. . . . ¶ Sunday, Sept. 3, at 7: Tammy Wynette, Johnny Rodriguez, and Johnny Paycheck. . . . ¶ Monday, Sept. 4, at 7: Kenny Rogers, the Oak Ridge Boys, and Dottie West. (Saratoga Springs. For information about tickets, call 977-9020, in New York.)

SPORTS

Baseball—**Yankees** at Yankee Stadium: Vs. Seattle, Friday and Saturday, Sept. 1-2, at 8, and Sunday, Sept. 3, at 2. . . . ¶ Detroit, Monday, Sept. 4, at 1 (doubleheader), and Tuesday and Wednesday, Sept. 5-6, at 8. . . . **Mets** at Shea Stadium: Vs. Pittsburgh, Friday and Saturday, Sept. 8-9, at 8:05.

Professional Football—Giants vs. Tampa Bay Buccaneers. (Tampa. Saturday, Sept. 2.) . . . ¶ Jets vs. Miami Dolphins. (Shea Stadium. Sunday, Sept. 3, at 1.)

Golf—U.S.G.A. Amateur Championship. (Plainfield Country Club, Plainfield. Through Sunday, Sept. 3.)

Racing—At **Belmont**: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1:30; through Monday, Oct. 23. The Gazelle Handicap, Saturday, Sept. 2; the Jerome Handicap, Monday, Sept. 4; the Astarita, Wednesday, Sept. 6; and the Futurity, Saturday, Sept. 9. (Frequent trains leave Penn Station for the track Wednesdays through Fridays between 11 and 1:10, and Saturdays, Sundays, and Labor Day between 11 and 1:15.) . . . **Monmouth Park**, Oceanport, N.J.: Weekdays at 1:30; through Monday, Sept. 4. (A special train will leave Penn Station for the track Saturday and Labor Day at 11:35.) . . . **Meadowlands**: Weeknights at 8, from Tuesday, Sept. 5, through Saturday, Dec. 30. The Paterson Handicap, Tuesday, Sept. 5.

Tennis—United States Open Championships. (U.S.T.A. National Tennis Center, Flushing Meadow. Wednesday, Aug. 30, through Thursday, Sept. 7, at 11 and 7:30; Friday and Saturday, Sept. 8-9, at 11; and Sunday, Sept. 10, at 2. For information about tickets, call 651-5200.)

Trotting—At **Yonkers Raceway**: Weeknights at 8; through Saturday, Oct. 7. . . . **Saratoga Raceway**, Saratoga Springs: Weeknights at 8:15, except Labor Day, when post time will be 2:15; through Saturday, Nov. 18.

ET ALIA

"Echoes of the Drums"—An exhibition of North and South American Indian culture from the collection of the Museum of the American

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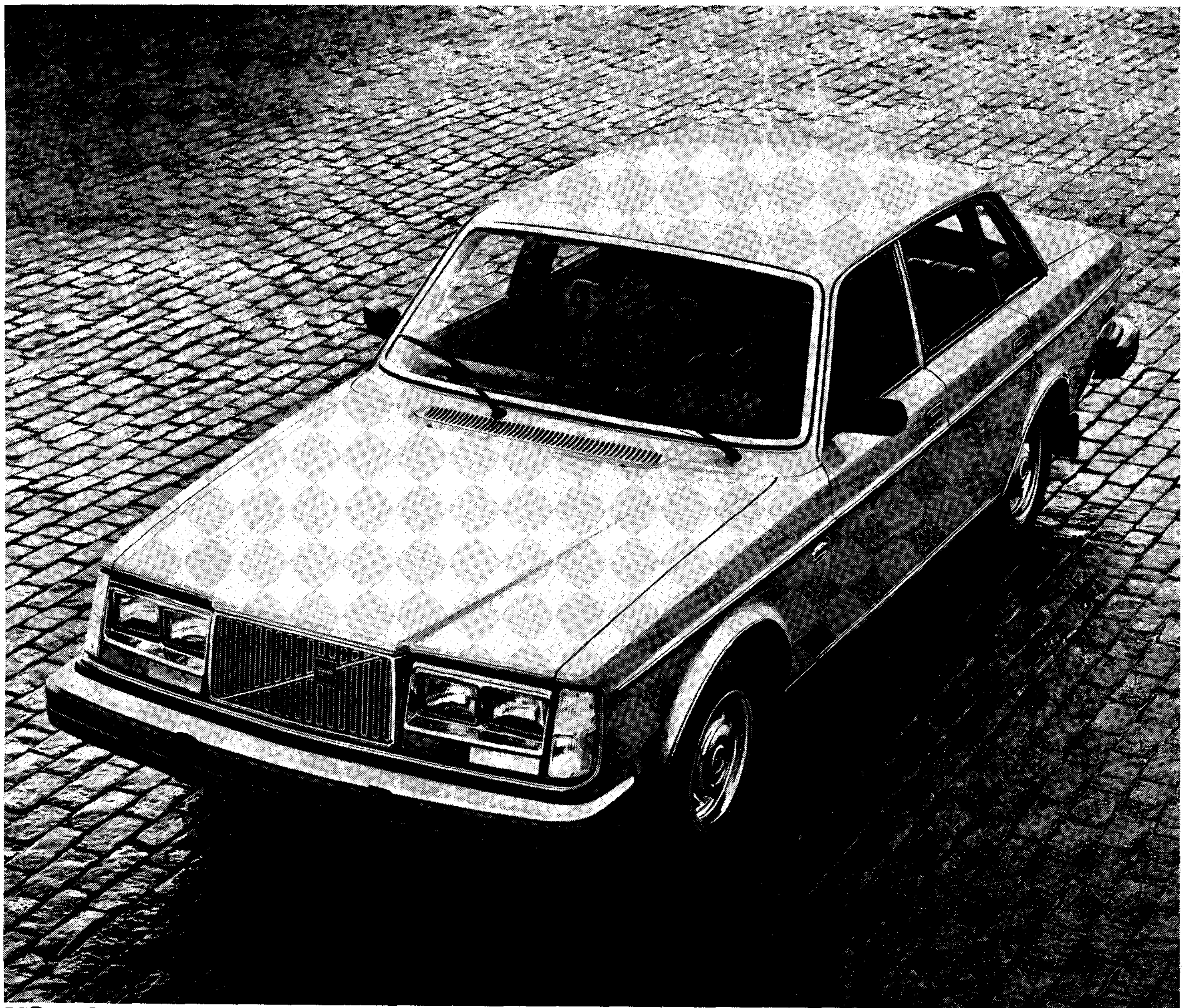

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Indian. Included are totemic house posts, sports and games equipment, beadwork, jewelry, musical instruments, masks, books, and photographs. Through Oct. 31. (U.S. Custom House, Bowling Green. Weekdays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

THE GREAT OUTDOORS

(If the weather looks doubtful, call the New York Parks Department, 755-4100, for news. The same number may be called for information about all free entertainment in the city.)

New York Shakespeare Festival—Free performances of THE TAMING OF THE SHREW. Raúl Juliá, a star if ever there was one, makes a magnificent Petruchio, and Meryl Streep, a beauty with a flair for knockabout comedy, is fine as Katherine, both of them breaking out of the general inept facetiousness of this production. There are good supporting performances by Larry Pine and Joel Brooks, but the other actors don't stand a chance. Handsome settings by Wilford Leach, who also directed. (Delacorte Theatre, Central Park near W. 81st St. Nightly at 8. Closes Sunday, Sept. 3. For information about tickets, call 535-5630.)

Central Park Mall—William Mount-Burke directing the Naumburg Symphony Orchestra and the Light Opera of Manhattan in Lehár's "The Merry Widow," in concert form and in English. (Sunday, Sept. 3, at 5.)

Wollman Rink—The Dr Pepper Central Park Music Festival will close with performances by Chicago and Gary Yudman. (Wednesday, Aug. 30, and Friday and Saturday, Sept. 1-2, at 7. For information about tickets, call 249-8870.)

Lincoln Center Out-of-Doors—Final performances of a three-week festival of jazz, dance, chamber music, cabaret, country music, Hispanic specials, musical comedy, and street theatre. LINCOLN CENTER PLAZA: Thursday, Aug. 31, the Off Center Theatre (for children) at 11, the American Dance Movement at 2:30, and Youth Theatre Interactions at 5. . . . ¶ Friday, Sept. 1, the Bond Street Theatre Coalition at 2:30, and Charles Moore and Dances & Drums of Africa at 5. . . . ¶ Saturday, Sept. 2, Mini Events at noon, Latino Women's Poetry and Music Festival at 2:30, and the International Afrikan-American Ballet at 5. . . . ¶ Sunday, Sept. 3, Mini Events at noon, the Everyman Street Theatre Company of Washington Workshops for Careers in the Arts at 2:30, and Street Theatre Symposium at 4. . . . DAMROSCH PARK: Wednesday through Saturday, Aug. 30-Sept. 2, at 8, a musical revue entitled "Broadway Soul at Lincoln Center." . . ¶ Sunday, Sept. 3, at 8. David Stahl conducting the American Symphony Orchestra, with Leon Bates, piano.

Jones Beach Theatre—A revival of Irving Berlin's ANNIE GET YOUR GUN, with Lucie Arnaz and Harve Presnell. (Wednesday through Friday at 8:30, and Saturday at 9:30. Matinée Saturday at 5. Closes Saturday, Sept. 2. For tickets, call 516 221-1000.)

Washington Square Outdoor Art Exhibit—The semiannual Washington Square Outdoor Art Exhibit will be on view Saturday through Monday, Sept. 2-4; Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 9-10; and Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 16-17, from noon until sundown.

Deep Breathing—The roadways in Central Park are closed to automobiles in favor of strollers and bicyclists from 10 to 4 Tuesdays through Fridays, and from 7 to 11 Tuesday through Thursday evenings, as well as all day Saturdays, Sundays, and Labor Day.

COMING EVENTS

(A checklist for readers who plan ahead.)

Automobile Racing—United States Grand Prix. (Watkins Glen. Oct. 1.)

Baseball—METS at Shea Stadium: Vs. Pittsburgh, Sept. 10 (day). Chicago, Sept. 11-12 (night). Montreal, Sept. 13-14 (n). Philadelphia, Sept. 22 (n) and Sept. 23-24 (d). St. Louis, Sept. 25-26 (n). . . . YANKEES at Yankee Stadium: Vs. Boston, Sept. 15 (night) and Sept. 16-17 (day). Milwaukee, Sept. 18-19 (n). Toronto, Sept. 26-28 (n). Cleveland, Sept. 29 (n) and Sept. 30-Oct. 1 (d). . . . AMERICAN LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP PLAYOFFS: Start Oct. 3. . . . NATIONAL LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP PLAYOFFS: Start Oct. 4. . . . WORLD SERIES: Starts Oct. 10 in the home park of the National League champion.

Professional Basketball—Exhibition games—At Madison Square Garden: Washington vs. Boston and Knicks vs. Philadelphia, Oct. 5. . . . ¶ Washington vs. Detroit and Knicks vs. Boston, Oct. 7.

College Football—SATURDAY, SEPT. 16: Army vs. Lafayette, at West Point; Colgate vs. Holy Cross, at Hamilton; and Fordham vs. Widener, at Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands. . . . SATURDAY, SEPT. 23: Army vs. Virginia, at West Point; Brown vs. Yale, at Providence; Cornell vs. Princeton, at Ithaca; Dartmouth vs. Pennsylvania, at Hanover; Grambling State vs. Morgan State, in a benefit game, at Yankee Stadium; and Harvard vs. Columbia, at Cambridge. . . . SATURDAY, SEPT. 30: Army vs. Washington State, at West Point; Boston College vs. Navy, at Chestnut Hill; Colgate vs. Cornell, at Hamilton; Columbia vs. Lafayette, at Baker Field; Manhattan vs. Maritime Academy, at Mt. St. Michael Field; Rutgers vs. Princeton, at Giants Stadium; and Yale vs. Connecticut, at New Haven. . . . SATURDAY, OCT. 7: Boston College vs. Pittsburgh, at Chestnut Hill; Harvard vs. Colgate, at Cambridge; Pennsylvania vs. Columbia, at Philadelphia; Princeton vs. Brown, at Princeton; Williams vs. Trinity, at Williamstown; and Yale vs. Rutgers, at New Haven.

Professional Football—SUNDAY, SEPT. 10: Giants vs. Dallas Cowboys, at Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands, and Jets vs. Buffalo Bills, at Buffalo. . . . SUNDAY, SEPT. 17: Giants vs. Kansas City Chiefs, at Giants Stadium, and Jets vs. Seattle Seahawks, at Shea Stadium. . . . SUNDAY, SEPT. 24: Giants vs. San Francisco Forty-Niners, at Giants Stadium, and Jets vs. Washington Redskins, at Washington. . . . SUNDAY, OCT. 1: Jets vs. Pittsburgh Steelers, at Shea Stadium, and Giants vs. Atlanta Falcons, at Atlanta. . . . SUNDAY, OCT. 8: Jets vs. Buffalo Bills, at Shea Stadium, and Giants vs. Dallas Cowboys, at Dallas.

Hockey—Exhibition games—At MADISON SQUARE GARDEN: Rangers vs. Philadelphia Flyers, Sept. 26. . . . ¶ Rangers vs. Boston Bruins, Oct. 4. . . . NASSAU COLISEUM: Islanders vs. Philadelphia Flyers, Sept. 23. . . . ¶ Islanders vs. Atlanta Flames, Sept. 26. . . . ¶ Islanders vs. Buffalo Sabres, Sept. 30. . . . ¶ Islanders vs. Toronto Maple Leafs, Oct. 3.

Racing—At Bowie, Md.: Sept. 11-Oct. 20.

Trotting—At Roosevelt Raceway, Westbury: Oct. 9-Dec. 11.

Music—METROPOLITAN OPERA (580-9830): The season will open on Sept. 18, with Wagner's "Tannhäuser," and will run through April 14. . . . AVERY FISHER HALL (TR 4-2424): Opening performance of the New York Philharmonic, Zubin Mehta conducting, Sept. 14. . . . ¶ Moscow Chamber Orchestra, Oct. 8. . . . CARNEGIE HALL (CI 7-7459): Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, Sept. 17. . . . ¶ American Symphony Orchestra, Sept. 24.

Dance—Merce Cunningham and Dance Company, at the City Center, Sept. 26-Oct. 8.

Theatre—Some productions scheduled to open during the next several weeks: A musical revue, "Eubie!," conceived by Julianne Boyd from the music of Eubie Blake. The cast includes Ethel Beatty, Leslie Dockery, Gregory Hines, Maurice Hines, Alaina Reed, and Lynnie Godfrey. . . . ¶ Gogol's play "The Inspector General," in which Bob Balaban, Theodore Bikel, Helen Burns, Arnold Soboloff, and Max Wright will appear. . . . ¶ In "The Crucifer of Blood," a play by Paul Giovanni based on characters created by Arthur Conan Doyle, Paxton Whitehead is a young Sherlock Holmes. . . . ¶ "Broadway, Broadway," a comedy by Terrence McNally, starring Geraldine Page and James Coco. . . . ¶ Henry Fonda and Jane Alexander in "The First Monday in October," a play by Robert E. Lee and Jerome Lawrence. . . . ¶ A revival of the 1926 musical "Oh, Kay!," by George and Ira Gershwin. Thomas Meehan is responsible for a new book, derived from the original by P. G. Wodehouse and Guy Bolton. Jack Weston has the leading role.

Other Dates—Third-quarter Federal, New York State, and New York City income-tax payments are due Friday, Sept. 15. . . . ¶ The New York Film Festival opens on Sept. 22 at Avery Fisher Hall. Moves next day to Alice Tully Hall: Sept. 23-Oct. 7. Winds up at Avery Fisher Hall on Oct. 8. . . . ¶ Bryant Park Flower Show, Sept. 22-27. . . . ¶ The first day of fall is Sept. 23. . . . ¶ Columbus Day will be celebrated on Monday, Oct. 9.

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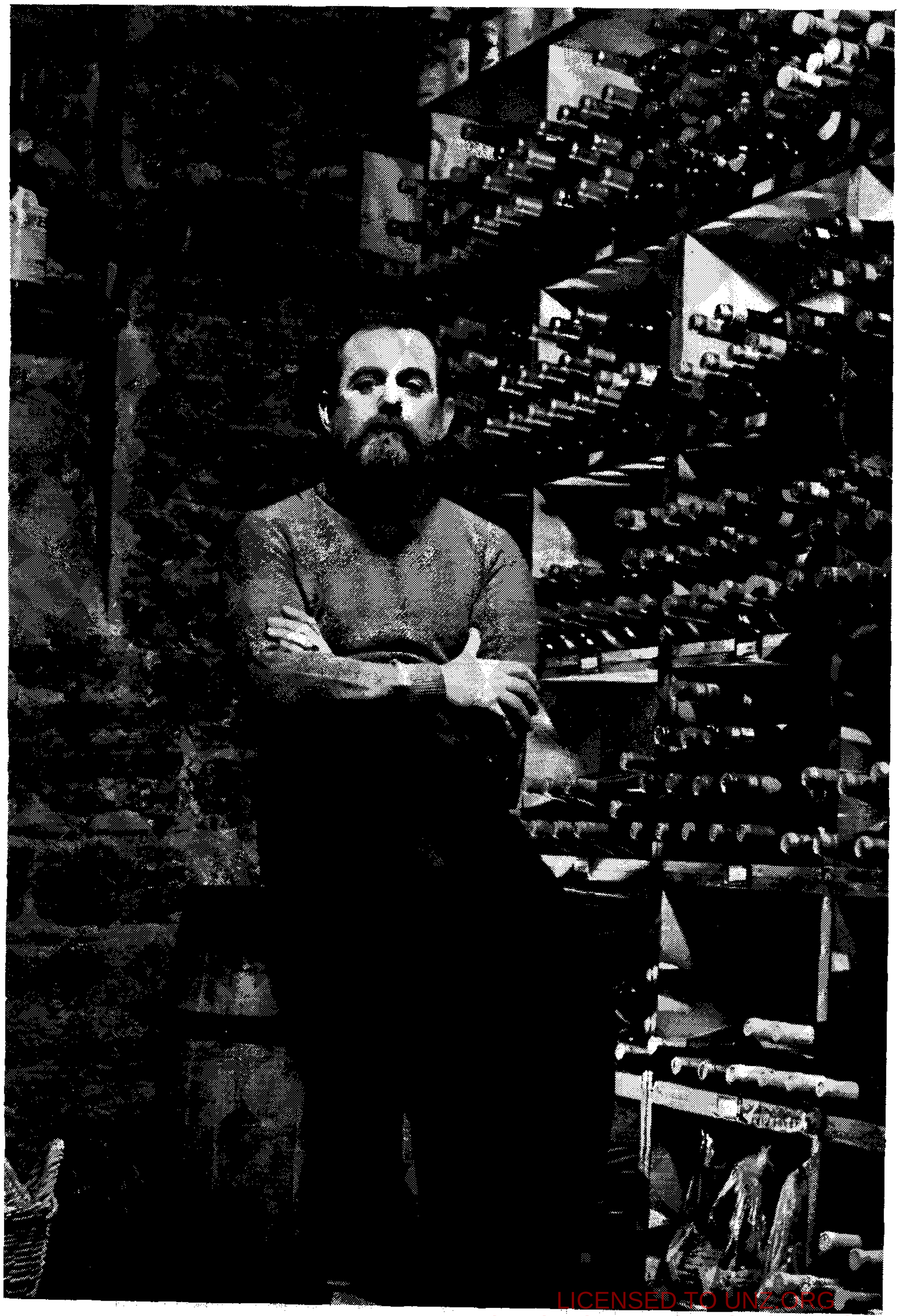

ROBERT JOFFREY
Choreographer, Oenophile

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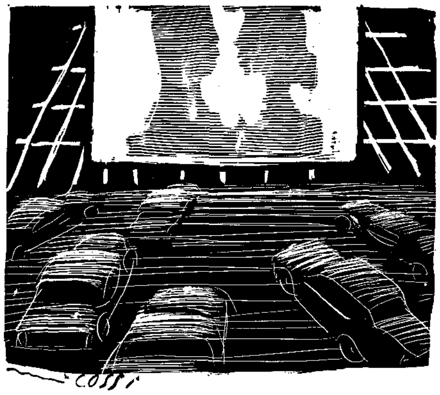
GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES



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3	4	5	6	7		

THE FILMS PLAYING THE NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSES ARE DESCRIBED IN BRIEF IN THE SECTION BELOW

EAST SIDE

Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (677-6350; theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Through Sept. 3: "Chulas Fronteras" and "Always for Pleasure."
Sept. 4: Theatre closed.
From Sept. 5: "The All-American Boy."

Art, *36 E. 8th. (GR 3-7014)*
Through Sept. 5: "Outrageous!" and "Putney Swope."
From Sept. 6: "3 Women" and "Looking for Mr. Goodbar."

St. Marks Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 8th. (533-9292)
Through Sept. 5: "The Last Waltz" and "Midnight Cowboy."
From Sept. 6: To be announced.

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (GR 5-1660)
Through Aug. 31: "Dona Flor and Her Two Husbands."
From Sept. 1: "Madame Rosa."

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Revenge of the Pink Panther."

Murray Hill, 160 E. 34th. (685-7652)
"National Lampoon's Animal House."

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Heaven Can Wait."

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
Through Aug. 31: "Hooper."
From Sept. 1: To be announced.

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (PL 9-1411)
"National Lampoon's Animal House."

Trans-Lux East, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (PL 9-2262)
"Néa."

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (EL 5-3320)
"Slave of Love."

Baronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
"Interiors."

Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
"Eyes of Laura Mars."

R.K.O. 59th St., 220 E. 59th. (688-0750)
"Young Frankenstein."

D. W. Griffith, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Jaws 2."

Cinema I, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (PL 3-6022)
"Girl Friends."

Cinema II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (PL 3-0774)
"Cat and Mouse."

Gemini 1, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Through Aug. 31: "The Buddy Holly Story."
From Sept. 1: "Revenge of the Pink Panther."

Gemini 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-2720)
Through Aug. 31: "Revenge of the Pink Panther."
From Sept. 1: "2001: A Space Odyssey."

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (RE 7-2622)
"National Lampoon's Animal House."

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (RE 4-0302)
"Who'll Stop the Rain."

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Heaven Can Wait."

72nd Street East, 1st Ave. at 72nd. (BU 8-9304)
Through Sept. 5: "The Cheap Detective."
From Sept. 6: To be announced.

Trans-Lux 85th St., Madison at 85th. (BU 8-3180)
"Revenge of the Pink Panther."

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Who'll Stop the Rain."

Loews Orpheum, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
"Hooper."

Loews Ciné, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (427-1332)
"Foul Play."

86th St. East, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
"National Lampoon's Animal House."

R.K.O. 86th St., Lexington at 86th. (289-8900)
Theatre 1: "Young Frankenstein."
Theatre 2: "Jaws 2."

WEST SIDE

Waverly, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
"Madame Rosa."

Greenwich, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
"Revenge of the Pink Panther."

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Young Frankenstein."
Theatre 2: "An Unmarried Woman."
Theatre 3: Through Aug. 31: "Lumière" and "Cries and Whispers." From Sept. 1: "The Buddy Holly Story."
Theatre 4: "Dona Flor and Her Two Husbands."

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (PL 7-2406)
"Lin Tse-hsu" ("The Opium War").

Music Hall, 6th Ave. at 50th. (757-3100)
"The Magic of Lassie."

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Grease."

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (757-2715)
"Who'll Stop the Rain."

Playboy, 110 W. 57th. (JU 6-4448)
To be announced.

Little Carnegie, 146 W. 57th. (246-5123)
"Bread and Chocolate."

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"Viva Italia!"

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Foul Play."

Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Foul Play."

Cinema Studio, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
"The Lady Vanishes" and "The 39 Steps."

Embassy 72nd St., B'way at 72nd. (SC 4-6745)
Through Aug. 31: "The Cheap Detective."
From Sept. 1: "Dona Flor and Her Two Husbands."

Loews 83rd Quad, B'way at 83rd. (877-3190)
Theatre 1: "The Buddy Holly Story."
Theatre 2: "An Unmarried Woman."
Theatre 3: "Jaws 2."
Theatre 4: "Revenge of the Pink Panther."

New Yorker, B'way at 88th. (TR 4-9189)
Through Aug. 31: "Hazel's People."
From Sept. 1: "Saturday Night Fever" and "Looking for Mr. Goodbar."

Olympia, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Through Aug. 31: "The Cheap Detective" and "The Deep."
From Sept. 1: "Jaws 2" and "Rollercoaster."

TIMES SQUARE

(Only the films marked with a dagger are described in our "In Brief" section, further along.)

R.K.O. Cinerama 1, B'way at 47th. (975-8366)
"Jaws 2." (†)

R.K.O. Cinerama 2, B'way at 47th. (975-8369)
"Hooper." (†)

Criterion, B'way at 44th. (582-1795)
"Who'll Stop the Rain." (†)

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (757-2408)
"Young Frankenstein." (†)

Embassy. B'wav at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 2: "Saturday Night Fever." (†)
Theatre 3: "The Driver."
Theatre 4: "An Unmarried Woman." (†)

Forum, B'way at 47th. (757-8320)
"Foul Play." (†)

Loews Astor Plaza, B'way at 44th. (869-8340)
"National Lampoon's Animal House." (†)

Loews State 1, B'way at 45th. (582-5060)
"Eyes of Laura Mars." (†)

Loews State 2, B'way at 45th. (582-5070)
"Heaven Can Wait." (†)

National, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
"Revenge of the Pink Panther." (†)

Rivoli, B'way at 49th. (247-1633)
Through Aug. 31: "Tintorera."
From Sept. 1: "2001: A Space Odyssey." (†)

Victoria, B'way at 46th. (354-5636)
Through Sept. 5: "Star Wars."
From Sept. 6: "Avalanche."

REVIVAL HOUSES

(Only the films marked with a dagger are described in our "In Brief" section, further along.)

Bleecker St. Cinema, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Aug. 30: "The Testament of Dr. Cordelier" (1961), in French, directed by Jean Renoir, with Jean-Louis Barrault; and "Day for Night" (1973), in French, directed by François Truffaut, with Jacqueline Bisset, Jean-Pierre Aumont, Jean-Pierre Léaud, and Valentina Cortese.
Aug. 31: "Next Stop, Greenwich Village" (1976), directed by Paul Mazursky, with Shelley Winters, Lenny Baker, Ellen Greene, Christopher Walken, and Antonio Fargas; and "My Sister Eileen" (1942), directed by Alexander Hall, with Rosalind Russell, Brian Aherne, and Janet Blair.
Sept. 1-2: "The Decameron" (1971), in Italian, directed by Pier Paolo Pasolini, with Franco Citti, Ninetto Davoli, and Pasolini himself; and "Fellini Satyricon" (1970), in Italian, directed by Federico Fellini.
Sept. 3-4: "Women in Love" (1970), directed by Ken Russell, with Glenda Jackson, Alan Bates, Oliver Reed, and Jennie Linden; and "Marat/Sade" (1967), directed by Peter Brook, performed by the Royal Shakespeare Company.
Sept. 5: "Sword of Fury" (1973), in Japanese, directed by Tai Kato; and "The Sword of Doom" (1967), in Japanese, directed by Kihachi Okamoto.
Sept. 6: "Shoot the Piano Player" (†); and "Detour" (1945), directed by Edgar G. Ulmer, with Ann Savage and Tom Neal.
Sept. 7: "Taxi Driver" (1976), directed by Martin Scorsese, with Robert De Niro; *and "On the Waterfront" (1954)*, directed by Elia Kazan, with Marlon Brando, Lee J. Cobb, Eva Marie Saint, Karl Malden, and Rod Steiger.

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. at 57th. (757-2131)
Aug. 30: "Carmen" (1916), a silent film, directed by Ernst Lubitsch, with Pola Negri; and "The Loves of Carmen" (1948), directed by Charles Vidor, with Rita Hayworth and Glenn Ford.
Aug. 31: "The Lost Patrol" (1934), directed by John Ford, with Victor McLaglen, Boris Karloff, Reginald Denny, and Alan Hale; and "Gunga Din" (1939), directed by George Stevens, with Cary Grant, Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., Victor McLaglen, Eduardo Ciannelli, and Sam Jaffe.
Sept. 1: "The 400 Blows" (1959), in French, directed by François Truffaut, with Jean-Pierre Léaud; and "Small Change." (†)
Sept. 2: "Persona" (†) and "Hiroshima, Mon Amour." (†)
Sept. 3: "Children of Paradise" (1945), in French, directed by Marcel Carné, with Jean-Louis Barrault, Arletty, Pierre Brasseur, and Pierre Renoir.
Sept. 4: "The Bicycle Thief" (†) and "Accattone!" (†)
Sept. 5: "Duel in the Sun" (†); and "Pursued" (1947), directed by Raoul Walsh, with Teresa Wright, Robert Mitchum, and Judith Anderson.
Sept. 6: "The Old Dark House" (†) and "The Cat and the Canary." (†)
Sept. 7: "High and Low" (†); and "Pale Flower" (1964), in Japanese, directed by Masahiro Shinoda.

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through Aug. 31: "My Uncle Antoine" (1971), in French, directed by Claude Jutra, with Jacques Gagnon; and "Two Eng-

lish Girls" (1972), in French, directed by François Truffaut, with Jean-Pierre Léaud.

Sept. 1-2: "American Graffiti" (1973), directed by George Lucas, with Richard Dreyfuss and Ronny Howard; and "Car Wash." (†)

Sept. 3-4: "More Three Stooges," six of their two-reel comedies; and "200 Motels" (1971), with Frank Zappa and the Mothers of Invention.

Sept. 5: "Padre Padrone" (1978), in Italian, directed by Paolo and Vittorio Taviani; and "We All Loved Each Other So Much." (†)

Sept. 6-7: "The Goodbye Girl" (1977), directed by Herbert Ross, with Marsha Mason and Richard Dreyfuss; and "The Heartbreak Kid." (†)

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)

Through Sept. 2: "Woodstock" (1970), directed by Michael Wadleigh, a film of the 1969 festival.

Sept. 3-6: Three films of Elvis Presley in concert—"Elvis: That's the Way It Is" (1970), "Elvis on Tour" (1973), and "Elvis on TV."

From Sept. 7: "Jonah Who Will Be 25 in the Year 2000" (1976), in French, directed by Alain Tanner, with Jean-Luc Bideau, Miou-Miou, and Raymond Bussières; and "The Wonderful Crook." (†)

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)

Through Sept. 2: "Les Girls" (1957), directed by George Cukor, with Gene Kelly, Mitzi Gaynor, Kay Kendall, Henry Daniell, Taina Elg, Jacques Bergerac, and Patrick MacNee; and Yolanda and the Thief" (1945), directed by Vincente Minnelli, with Fred Astaire, Lucille Bremer, Frank Morgan, Mildred Natwick, and Mary Nash.

Sept. 3-5: "Red Dust" (†) and "Tarzan and His Mate." (†)

From Sept. 6: "Designing Woman" (1957), directed by Vincente Minnelli, with Gregory Peck, Lauren Bacall, and Dolores Gray; and "The Women." (†)

Thalia, B'way at 95th. (222-3370)

Through Aug. 31: "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington" (1939), directed by Frank Capra, with Jean Arthur, James Stewart, Claude Rains, Guy Kibbee, and Beulah Bondi; and "It's a Wonderful Life" (1946), directed by Frank Capra, with James Stewart, Donna Reed, Lionel Barrymore, Thomas Mitchell, and Henry Travers.

Sept. 1-2: "Persona" (†) and "3 Women." (†)

Sept. 3-4: A program of Surrealistic films by such directors as Georges Méliès, Jean Renoir, and Man Ray.

Sept. 5: "Dead of Night" (†) and "The Most Dangerous Game." (†)

Sept. 6-7: To be announced.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

Aug. 30: "Balalaika" (1939), directed by Reinhold Schunzel, with Ilona Massey, Nelson Eddy, Charles Ruggles, and Frank Morgan; and "The Cat and the Fiddle" (1934), directed by William K. Howard, with Ramon Novarro, Jeanette MacDonald, Charles Butterworth, and Vivienne Segal.

Aug. 31: "The Hucksters" (1947), directed by John Conway, with Clark Gable, Deborah Kerr, Sydney Greenstreet, and Ava Gardner; and "Please Believe Me" (1950), directed by Norman Taurog, with Deborah Kerr, Robert Walker, Mark Stevens, and Peter Lawford.

Sept. 1: "The Sun Also Rises" (1957), directed by Henry King, with Tyrone Power, Ava Gardner, Errol Flynn, Mel Ferrer, and Eddie Albert; and "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" (1952), directed by Henry King, with Gregory Peck, Susan Hayward, and Ava Gardner.

Sept. 2-3: "The Greene Murder Case" (†) and "The Canary Murder Case." (†)

Sept. 4-5: "Bringing Up Baby" (1938), directed by Howard Hawks, with Katharine Hepburn, Cary Grant, and Charles Ruggles; and "My Favorite Wife." (†)

Sept. 6: "Rose of Washington Square" (†) and "That Night in Rio." (†)

Sept. 7: "The Talk of the Town" (†) and "The More the Merrier." (†)

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Roy and Niuta Titus Auditorium, Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St. (956-7078)—Aug. 31 at 2:30: "Crazy Mama" (1975), directed by Jonathan Demme, with Cloris Leachman, Stuart Whitman, and Ann Sothern.... ¶ Aug. 31 at 6: "Assault on Precinct 13" (1976), directed by John Carpenter, with Austin Stoker, Darwin Joston, and Laurie Zimmer.... ¶ Aug. 31 at 8:30: "Orca" (1977), directed by Michael Anderson, with Richard Harris and Charlotte Rampling.... ¶ Sept. 1 at 2:30: "Shining Star" (1977), directed by Sig Shore, with Harvey Keitel, Ed Nelson, Cynthia Bostick, Bert Parks, and Earth, Wind and Fire.... ¶ Sept. 1 at 6: "Baboona" (1935), directed by Martin and Osa Johnson, a Travelogue documentary.... ¶ Sept. 2 at noon: "The Big Bus" (1976), directed by James Frawley, with Joseph Bologna, Stockard Channing, John Beck, René Auberjonois, and Ned Beatty.... ¶ Sept. 2 at 2:30: "The Wilby Conspiracy" (1975), directed by Ralph Nelson, with Sidney Poitier, Michael Caine, Nicol Williamson, and Helmut Dantine.... ¶ Sept. 2 at 5: "Gator" (1976), directed by Burt Reynolds, with Reynolds, Lauren Hutton, and Jack Weston.... ¶ Sept. 3 at noon: "The Big Bus."... ¶ Sept. 3 at 2:30: "Orca."... ¶ Sept. 3 at 5: "The Steel Helmet" (1951), directed by Samuel Fuller, with Robert Hutton, Gene Evans, and Richard Loo.... ¶ Sept. 4 at noon: Part 1 of a program of animated short films done between 1908 and 1918 by Emile Cohl.... ¶ Sept. 4 at 2:30: "The Wilby Conspiracy."... ¶ Sept. 4 at 6: "Report to the Commissioner" (1975), directed by Milton Katselas, with Michael Moriarty, Yaphet Kotto, and Susan Blakely.... ¶ Sept. 5 at noon: Part 2 of a program of animated short films done between 1908 and 1918 by Emile Cohl.... ¶ Sept. 5 at 2:30: "Face in the Sky" (1933), directed by Harry Lachman, with Spencer Tracy and Marian Nixon.... ¶ Sept. 5 at 6: "The Stepford Wives" (1975), directed by Bryan Forbes, with Katharine Ross and Paula Prentiss.... ¶ Sept. 7 at 2:30: "Report to the Commissioner."... ¶ Sept. 7 at 6: "The Nickel Ride" (1974), directed by Robert Mulligan, with Jason Miller and Linda Haynes.... ¶ Sept. 7 at 8:30: "The Killing of a Chinese Bookie" (1976), directed by John Cassavetes, with Ben Gazzara, Timothy Carey, Seymour Cassel, and Al Ruban. (A limited number of tickets are available, but only to those applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing.)

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN THESE PAGES DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

Accattone! (1961)—Pier Paolo Pasolini's film about a Catholic boy at the bottom of the heap. The characters and the story are simple and anti-bourgeois by nature; Pasolini's coldly humorless theories and haut-bourgeois intellect sabotage practically everything that he hopes to do emotionally in the picture. In Italian. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; Sept. 4.)

The All-American Boy (1973)—Jon Voight is a prizefighter suffering from a type of working-class alienation that is indistinguishable from bellyache. He mopes through the picture looking puffy, like a rain cloud about to spritz. Charles Eastman wrote and directed this disgracefully condescending view of America as a wasteland populated by grotesques, stupes, and sons of bitches; they are incapable of love and have false values—and to prove it Eastman sets Voight to walking the Antonioni walk. This is probably the only movie on record in which you can watch boxers working out in a gym while you hear a Gregorian chant. With Carol Androsky, Art Metrano, E. J. Peaker, Anne Archer, Ned Glass, Harry Northup, Rosalind Cash, Jeanne Cooper, and Jaye P. Morgan. (Little Theatre, starting Sept. 5.)

Always for Pleasure—A documentary film, directed by Les Blank. (Little Theatre; through Sept. 3.)

The Bicycle Thief (1949)—Vittorio De Sica's story of a poor man's search for his stolen bicycle is deceptively simple. At first, there is ironic tenderness: humanity observed with compassion but without illusion. Then the search becomes an odyssey of poverty, and the richnesses and the enigmas sneak up on the audience. What is the meaning of the seeress's words? How is it that the hero who is searching for the bicycle thief becomes the bicycle thief? This Neo-Realist classic is on just about everybody's list of the greatest films. Cesare Zavattini wrote the script. In Italian. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; Sept. 4.)

Bread and Chocolate—With Nino Manfredi and Anna Karina, directed by Franco Brusati. In Italian. (Little Carnegie.)

The Buddy Holly Story—With Gary Busey in the title role, directed by Steve Rash. (Loews 83rd Quad.... ¶ Gemini 1; through Aug. 31.... ¶ Quad Cinema; starting Sept. 1.)

The Canary Murder Case (1929)—Philo Vance, the cultured amateur-detective hero of S. S. Van Dine's mystery novels, speaks so ornately, with such paralyzing erudition, that his unravelling a crime often seems more trouble than it's worth. The detective is far more sleek and entertaining as William Powell plays him in this early Paramount talkie. This was the first of the many Philo Vance cases to be filmed (published in 1927, it was the second—and best—of the books). The story is about the murder of a blackmailing musical-comedy star, who is played by the dazzling flapper Louise Brooks, with her short straight hair and bangs; from the way she looks (she seems to incarnate Art Deco), the men she has mistreated were lucky. And with Jean Arthur, James Hall, Gustav Von Seyffertitz, Eugene Pallette, Lawrence Grant, Ned Sparks, Louis John Bartels, E. H. Calvert, and Charles Lane. Directed by Malcolm St. Clair; the writers were S. S. Van Dine, Herman J. Mankiewicz, Florence Ryerson, and Albert S. LeVino. (William Powell went on to play Philo Vance three more times; Basil Rathbone had a shot at it, and then there were Warren William, Paul Lukas, Edmund Lowe, and many others.) (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 2-3.)

Car Wash (1976)—A junk-food mixture of poetry, black anger, bathroom humor, routines that have come through the sit-com mill, and worn-to-the-stump faggot jokes. The action is centered on one workday in an L.A. car wash that is white-owned but staffed mostly by blacks. The film's specialty is yanking laughs by having adult blacks do dirtier versions of the standard pranks that naughty kids used to do in comedies. Michael Schultz directed, from a script by Joel Schumacher. (Reviewed in our issue of 10/25/76.) (Cinema Village; Sept. 1-2.)

Cat and Mouse—Lelouch at his most tricksy and fake lyric, making a thriller with the inappropriately intelligent and beautiful Michèle Morgan as the wife of a film producer and high-rise builder. The plot involves rude and rich servants, an insurance man who turns up at a race track, and a charming, rotten detective, played by Serge Reggiani. In French. (5/22/78) (Cinema II.)

The Cat and the Canary (1927)—A classic horror film, with Laura La Plante and Creighton Hall, directed by the gifted Expressionist Paul Leni. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; Sept. 6.)

The Cheap Detective—Written by Neil Simon for Ray Stark, this has Peter Falk in a thin imitation of Humphrey Bogart—thin because it catches Bogart's mannerisms without his cast of thought—along with a host of beautiful women, including Louise Fletcher, Ann-Margret, Stockard Channing, Madeline Kahn, Marsha Mason. (7/3/78) (Embassy 72nd St., and Olympia; through Aug. 31.... ¶ 72nd Street East; through Sept. 5.)

Chulas Fronteras—A documentary film, directed by Les Blank. (Little Theatre; through Sept. 3.)

Cries and Whispers (1972)—Ingmar Bergman's dream play is set in a manor house at the turn of the century where a spinster in her late thirties (Harriet Andersson) is dying. Her two sisters (Ingrid Thulin and Liv Ullmann) have come to attend her, and they watch and wait, along with a peasant servant (Kari Sylwan). The movie is built out of a series of emotionally charged images that express in-

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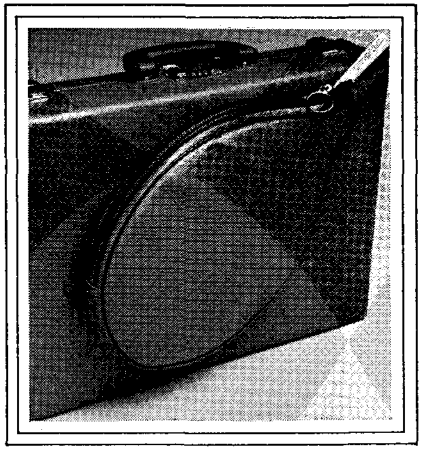

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ner stress, and Bergman handles them with the fluidity of a master. Superbly photographed by Sven Nykvist in a style suggesting Edvard Munch, the film is smooth and hypnotic; it has oracular power and the pull of a dream. Yet there's a nineteenth-century dullness at the heart of it. Each sister represents a different aspect of woman—woman viewed as the Other—and the film mingles didacticism with erotic mystery. In Swedish. (Quad Cinema; through Aug. 31.)

Dead of Night (1946)—Civilized five-part movie about the supernatural, with several classic episodes. The most celebrated: Michael Redgrave as a schizophrenic ventriloquist tormented by his dummy (directed by Cavalcanti); Googie Withers and Ralph Michael in the story of a mirror that reflects a crime of an earlier century (directed by Robert Hamer). Redgrave's overpowering performance—a small work of art—lifts the movie above the elegant, sophisticated entertainment it aspired to be. (Thalia; Sept. 5.)

The Deep (1977)—Don't plunge. From the Peter Benchley novel, with Robert Shaw, Jacqueline Bisset, and Nick Nolte; directed by Peter Yates. (7/4/77) (Olympia; through Aug. 31.)

Dona Flor and Her Two Husbands—Directed by Bruno Barreto. In Portuguese. (Quad Cinema. . . . ¶ Gramercy; through Aug. 31. . . . ¶ Embassy 72nd St.; starting Sept. 1.)

Duel in the Sun (1947)—Hilariously florid, sometimes called "Lust in the Dust." A Wagnerian Western, with Gregory Peck and Jennifer Jones as lovers so passionate they kill each other. She's Pearl Chavez, a half-breed wench, and so, by Hollywood convention, uncontrollably sexy, and Peck actually manages to bestir himself enough to play a hunk of egotistic hot stuff—maybe the name Lewt McCanles got to him, or maybe the producer, David O. Selznick, used electric prods. Set in Texas, it's a lavish, sensual spectacle; the director, King Vidor, can't keep it from being absurdly hammy, but he gives much of it a bravura excitement, and the hokum is irresistibly entertaining. With Joseph Cotten, Charles Bickford, Lillian Gish, Butterfly McQueen, Walter Huston, Herbert Marshall, Lionel Barrymore, Harry Carey, Sidney Blackmer, and many other celebrated names. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; Sept. 5.)

Eyes of Laura Mars—A thriller about a killer, set in New York, eyeballs being the theme. One gets the point—and guesses the murderer—very early on. Faye Dunaway, who has a genuine sweetness and a genuine acting talent, plays a fashion photographer. But the film, directed by Irvin Kershner, is nothing if not trite. (8/14/78) (Coronet, and Loews State 1.)

Foul Play—With Goldie Hawn and Chevy Chase, directed by Colin Higgins. (Loews Ciné, Cinema 3, Paramount, and Forum.)

Girl Friends—Directed by Claudia Weill, from a screenplay by Vicki Polon. About a friendship between a Jewish photographer (Melanie Mayron) and a blond Gentile (Anita Skinner) who gets married, precipitating jealousy. The subject is the interesting one of the counterpull between the wish for sociability and the wish to be alone, but the way the picture is made is rather importunate. (8/21/78) (Cinema I.)

Grease—John Travolta and Olivia Newton-John in an evocation of the fifties at high school. The movie runs on pure ozone, good times, and an easy homesickness for a past decade that the people who lived through it will not find particularly missable. (6/26/78) (Ziegfeld.)

The Greene Murder Case (1929)—William Powell again as Philo Vance, in the second of the films based on S. S. Van Dine mysteries; it's tolerably enjoyable, which puts it way ahead of the book (published in 1928). The Greenes are an unlucky, hateful family who live in a big mansion on the East River; despite Philo Vance's best efforts, there are fewer of them at the end of the picture than there were at the start. With Jean Arthur, Florence Eldridge, Eugene Pallette, E. H. Calvert, and Gertrude Norman. Directed by Frank Tuttle. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 2-3.)

Hazel's People—With Geraldine Page, Pat Hingle, and Graham Beckel; directed by Charles Davis. (New Yorker; through Aug. 31.)

The Heartbreak Kid (1972)—As the director, Elaine May finds her comic tone (befuddled skepticism) and scores a first besides—no other American woman director has ever directed her daughter in a leading role. Jeannie Berlin plays the voluptuously giddy bride, whose groom (Charles Grodin) falls in love with a cool American dream girl (Cybill Shepherd) three days after the wedding. From Neil Simon's script, based on a Bruce Jay Friedman story. (Cinema Village; Sept. 6-7.)

Heaven Can Wait—We all can wait for something better, in spite of the acting contributions of Warren Beatty, as a dead football player intent on being reincarnated; of Julie Christie, as a gutsy English girl in love with him; of James Mason, as a heavenly guardian angel; and—most startling of all—in spite of a script by the tremendously intelligent Elaine May, in collaboration with Warren Beatty. (7/10/78) (34th St. East, Loews Tower East, and Loews State 2.)

High and Low (1963)—A first-rate detective thriller about a kidnapping. It happens to have been made in Japan, but it is very like the best Hitchcock. Directed by Akira Kurosawa and starring Toshiro Mifune. In Japanese. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; Sept. 7.)

Hiroshima, Mon Amour (1959)—A tortured love affair between a French actress and a Japanese architect in the city that was devastated by the first atomic bomb. Alain Resnais's controversial début as a feature-film director; there is no controversy, however, about Emmanuèle Riva's splendid performance. In French. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; Sept. 2.)

Hooper—With Burt Reynolds, Jan-Michael Vincent, Sally Field, and Brian Keith; directed by Hal Needham. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Loews Orpheum, and R.K.O. Cinerama 2. . . . ¶ Eastside Cinema; through Aug. 31.)

Interiors—A giant stride made by Woody Allen, who has written and directed a magnificent study of a family in the midst of change. Nearly all the members of the family are afflicted by the pressures of a society that puts a premium on "self-expression." We are inside the skulls of people who look at the world as if it were partitioned off from them—as if they were separated from it by glass, which they are scared of breaking, because their control over themselves is so shaky. With performances by Geraldine Page, E. G. Marshall, Maureen Stapleton, Diane Keaton, Marybeth Hurt. The film is a noble endeavor that shows us knotted spirits in a world constricted by aesthetic and psychoanalytic jargon. (8/7/78) (Baronet.)

Jaws 2—The plastic old thing snaps again. With Roy Scheider, Lorraine Gary, and Murray Hamilton; directed by Jeannot Szwarc. (6/26/78) (D. W. Griffith, R.K.O. 86th St., Loews 83rd Quad, and R.K.O. Cinerama 1. . . . ¶ Olympia; starting Sept. 1.)

The Lady Vanishes (1938)—Alfred Hitchcock's murder mystery about a charming old lady who boards a train and disappears on it has some of the best examples of his comedy and his pleasurable perversity. In movie history, it is a quintessential suspense thriller. The hero is Michael Redgrave (making his film début); the heroine is Margaret Lockwood; the lady is the memorable Dame May Whitty. With Paul Lukas and Cecil Parker. (Cinema Studio.)

The Last Waltz—Martin Scorsese's film commemorating a performance by the rock-and-roll group named The Band. Scorsese has proved himself a most interesting director, but this movie is a failed exercise in melancholy over times past. The sound system itself is an overloud nightmare. (5/1/78) (St. Marks Cinema; through Sept. 5.)

Lin Tse-hsu ("The Opium War")—With Chao Tan and Ching Yin, directed by Chen Chun-li. From the People's Republic of China. In Mandarin. (Guild.)

Looking for Mr. Goodbar—Diane Keaton as Theresa Dunn, the teacher who cruises singles bars and is murdered by a man she picks up. Richard Brooks, who adapted the novel by Judith Rossner and directed, has laid a windy jeremiad about our permissive society on top of fractured film syntax. He's lost the erotic, pulpy morbidity that made the novel a compulsive read; the film is splintered, moralistic, tedious. With Tuesday Weld, Alan Feinstein, Richard Gere, and Richard Kiley. (10/24/77) (New Yorker; starting Sept. 1. . . . ¶ Art; starting Sept. 6.)

Lumière (1976)—Jeanne Moreau wrote, directed, and stars in this elevated daydream about the life of an actress. The picture is delicately dissociated; it nibbles around the edges of its subject. And it shares a weakness of many other high-flown junk movies: it is less interested in pace than in culture. In French. (12/20/76) (Quad Cinema; through Aug. 31.)

Madame Rosa—Simone Signoret giving a magnificent performance as a Jewish ex-whore of the Belleville *quartier* of Paris. Now too old and puffy to practice her job, she makes a meagre living by taking in the abandoned children of younger prostitutes. Her favorite foster child is the offspring of an Arab father, and she has faithfully brought the boy up as an Arab. The film was directed by Moshe Mizrahi, himself a Jew who was brought up in Alexandria. A firm, astute picture. In French. (3/27/78) (Waverly. . . . ¶ Gramercy; starting Sept. 1.)

The Magic of Lassie—A musical, with Lassie, James Stewart, Mickey Rooney, Pernell Roberts, and Stephanie Zimbalist; directed by Don Chaffey. (Music Hall.)

Midnight Cowboy (1969)—Jon Voight as Joe Buck, the cowboy, and Dustin Hoffman as Ratso Rizzo—two lost, lonely men who find friendship. The John Schlesinger film is a brutal, superficial satire of America, but the actors take hold of one's emotions and one's imagination. From James Leo Herlihy's novel. (St. Marks Cinema; through Sept. 5.)

The More the Merrier (1943)—It has a memorable funny love scene: the very proper office-worker heroine (Jean Arthur) reluctantly sits down on the front steps of her apartment building with the inventor-hero (Joel McCrea); they begin to neck, and she's embarrassed by what she feels. The film is set in Washington, D.C., during the Second World War; the housing shortage results in their becoming part of an innocent *ménage à trois* with Charles Coburn, an elderly businessman who enjoys playing Cupid. Directed by George Stevens, this hit comedy is lively and well paced, but the fun is too often forced, and Jean Arthur overdoes her adorably prim act. (Remade in 1966 as "Walk, Don't Run," with Cary Grant in the Coburn role.) (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 7.)

The Most Dangerous Game (1932)—An amusing classic suspense melodrama; the plot was used several times, but this version, directed by Irving Pichel and Ernest Schoedsack, is the most entertaining. Leslie Banks (with his schizoid face—one half suave Englishman, the other half twisted and with suggestions of exotic evil) is the mad hunter who stalks human prey, and Joel McCrea is his target. Fay Wray does her usual charming terrified heroine. (Thalia; Sept. 5.)

My Favorite Wife (1940)—Tennyson wrote "Enoch Arden" in 1864, and the movies have been making versions of it ever since. D. W. Griffith did it in 1908 (and again in 1911). This one is the most famous and the funniest. On the day Cary Grant (as Nick Arden) marries Gail Patrick, his wife, Irene Dunne, shipwrecked seven years before, comes home. She follows the newlyweds on their honeymoon, prevents the consummation of the marriage, and purrs herself to an ultimate victory. Garson Kanin was twenty-seven (and at his liveliest) when he wrote and directed this screwball-classic hit. Randolph Scott plays the vegetarian scientist who was Dunne's companion on the island. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept 4-5.)

National Lampoon's Animal House—A beery piece that has its amiably funny flashes about the American college system, but more often consists of what is called undergraduate humor. Directed by John Landis. (8/14/78) (Murray Hill, Sutton, Beekman, 86th St. East, and Loews Astor Plaza.)

Néa—With Samy Frey and Ann Zacharias, directed by Nelly Kaplan. In French. (Trans-Lux East.)

The Old Dark House (1932)—This wonderful deadpan takeoff of horror plays was directed by the English eccentric James Whale in the witty, perverse, and creepy manner he also brought to "The Bride of Frankenstein." Five travellers (Charles Laughton, Melvyn Douglas, Raymond Massey, Gloria Stuart, and Lilian Bond) are caught in a storm in Wales. They seek shelter in a gloomy mansion, which is inhabited by a prize collection of monsters and decadent aristocrats: a mute, scarred brute of a butler (Boris Karloff) attends a prissy madman (Ernest Thesiger), his religious-fanatic hag of a sister (Eva Moore), his pyromaniac-dwarf younger brother (Brember Wells), and their father—a hundred-and-two-year-old baronet. (The performer is listed as "John Dudgeon," but the part is actually played by a woman.) Based on J. B. Priestley's novel "Benighted;" adapted by Benn W. Levy, with additional dialogue by R. C. Sherriff. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; Sept. 6.)

Outrageous! (1977)—A shock-the-bourgeois film from Canada about a friendship between a schizophrenic girl and a homosexual who is expert at drag entertainment. A cheap and false analogy is made between the states of the two characters, and it doesn't pass muster by miles. (9/12/77) (Art; through Sept. 5.)

Persona (1967)—A puzzling, obsessive film that Bergman seems not to have worked out but, rather, to have torn from himself. It has moments of intensity and a superb erotic monologue. Liv Ullmann plays an actress who has stopped speaking, and Bibi Andersson is her nurse, who becomes resentful and hysterical. In Swedish. (Thalia; Sept. 1-2. . . . ¶ Carnegie Hall Cinema; Sept. 2.)

Putney Swope (1969)—Robert Downey's goonish and obstreperous film, rude and pretty funny, about a weary black who gets heaved willy-nilly into the chairman's seat at an advertising agency. (Art; through Sept. 5.)

Red Dust (1932)—A sexy jungle melodrama, with Jean Harlow as a funny, tough girl who has been around, and an unshaven Clark Gable who thinks he prefers ladylike Mary Astor. It was remade in 1953 as "Mogambo"—with Ava Gardner in the Harlow role and Grace Kelly as the lady—but by then Gable, still manfully holding down his old role, didn't bring much heat to it. Harlow is immensely likable. Victor Fleming directed, from a script by John Lee Mahin. (Regency; Sept. 3-5.)

Revenge of the Pink Panther—Peter Sellers once again as the expert in *gaffes*, Inspector Clouseau, whose armored ineptitude periodically drives Herbert Lom, as his boss, into mental institutions. Story by Blake Edwards, and directed by him. A beloved film, recommended for its funniness about Clouseau's quite impervious inefficiency, and for his splendid decisiveness in mangling the pronunciation of English. (7/31/78) (Bay Cinema, Trans-Lux 85th St., Greenwich, Loews 83rd Quad, and National. . . . ¶ Gemini 2; through Aug. 31. . . . ¶ Gemini 1; starting Sept. 1.)

Rollercoaster (1977)—Directed by James Goldstone, a film that rides suavely on the innate terror that people have about rides in amusement parks. George Segal is an amusement-park safety inspector thankful to be yanked away from the—to him—infinite horrors of anti-smoking electric-shock therapy in order to investigate catastrophes caused by bombs laid on roller-coaster tracks. This isn't a disaster film: no dwelling on squelched bodies, and a certain amount of Hitchcockian suspense in broad-daylight chases among holiday-making crowds. (6/20/77) (Olympia; starting Sept. 1.)

Rose of Washington Square (1939)—This movie starring Alice Faye is quite clearly cribbed from the life of Fannie Brice; the contrast would be entertaining if the film were double-billed with "Funny Girl." When Alice sings the title song (an old Brice number), the lyrics are changed and "Roman nose" becomes "turned-up nose;" when Alice sings "My Man," her voice is lovely and velvety, but the song isn't very intense. The young bail-jumping sharper (based on Nicky Arnstein) who gives her her heartaches is played by Tyrone Power, who's more entertaining and plausible in the role than Omar Sharif was in the Streisand version. The period of the Ziegfeld Follies and speakeasy raids is recreated in the somewhat tacky Twentieth Century-Fox manner; the cinematographer, Karl Freund, gives the material some style, even though the director, Gregory Ratoff, doesn't seem to have a grip on the story. Fortunately, Al Jolson turns up and gives the film an authentic connection to its Broadway sources. Nunnally Johnson wrote the script and produced (under Zanuck). The cast includes Hobart Cavanaugh, Joyce Compton, Moroni Olsen, William Frawley, and Louis Prima and his band; among the other songs are "I'm Just Wild About Harry" and "Rockabye Your Baby with a Dixie Melody." The choreographer is Seymour Felix. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 6.)

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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TV attempts to find its own forms of beauty and release. John Travolta plays Tony, a nineteen-year-old Italian Catholic who works selling paint in a hardware store in Brooklyn's Bay Ridge; on Saturday nights, he's off to the local disco dream palace, where he's the champion dancer. It's Tony's pent-up physicality—his needing to dance, his becoming himself only when he dances—that draws us into the pop rapture of this film. The mood, the beat, and the trance rhythm are so purely entertaining, and Travolta is such an original presence, that a viewer spins past the crudeness in the script (by Norman Wexler, based on Nik Cohn's June 7, 1976 *New York* cover story, "Tribal Rites of the New Saturday *Night*"). Karen Lynn Gorney plays opposite Travolta as Stephanie, who is trying to climb out of Brooklyn and onto Manhattan, which is seen as the magic isle of opportunity—not ironically but with the old Gershwin spirit. John Badham directed. (12/26/77) (Embassy. . . . ¶ New Yorker; starting Sept. 1.)

SHOOT THE PIANO PLAYER (1962)—A comedy about melancholia—probably the *only* comedy about melancholia. Charles Aznavour is Charlie the Piano Player, who just wants to be "out of it" in François Truffaut's poetic, nihilistic gangster picture. A modern classic. In French. (Bleecker St. Cinema; Sept. 6.)

SLAVE OF LOVE—A new Russian classic, made by Nikita Mikhalkov. Set in the Crimea just after the October Revolution, with White Russians still holding out in the south, it tells a story worthy of Chekhov in its simplicity and idiosyncrasy of detail. A preposterously melodramatic film-within-the-film is being made. The woman star is Olga (Yelena Solovei), whose alertness glimmers. She longs for a cause almost as if she were yearning for a trip to Moscow; the cause is all around her, but she cannot see it. The film is a most beautiful and fragile story about people out of step with their era. In Russian. (8/28/78) (Plaza.)

SMALL CHANGE (1976)—Truffaut's series of sketches on the general theme of the resilience of children turns out to be that rarity—a poetic comedy that's really funny. Truffaut's deadpan, disjointed style is quicker and surer than ever before; the kids seem to be photographed in the act of inventing slapstick. There's a serious side (the story of a mistreated boy) that's a failure, and Truffaut's view of childhood innocence has elements of middle-class preciousness, but the jokes make the film worth seeing. In French. (10/4/76) (Carnegie Hall Cinema; Sept. 1.)

THE TALK OF THE TOWN (1942)—The combined writing talents of Irwin Shaw and Sidney Buchman resulted in a script about one Leopold Dilg (Cary Grant), a factory worker falsely accused of arson and manslaughter by the management. He breaks jail and is hidden in the home of a vacationing judge (Ronald Colman) by the judge's softhearted, fuzzy-headed landlady (Jean Arthur), who is convinced of Dilg's innocence. The judge takes a more dogmatic legalistic view, but is persuaded to relax his scruples. Did the authors think they were writing a Shavian comedy of ideas? The ideas are atrocious and silly, but the people are so pleasant that the picture manages to be quite amiable and high-spirited anyway. George Stevens directed; with Glenda Farrell, Edgar Buchanan, and Rex Ingram. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 7.)

TARZAN AND HIS MATE (1934)—Johnny Weissmuller and Maureen O'Sullivan in the second of the Weissmuller Tarzan series. This one is cheerful and outrageously preposterous. You are right in the heart of the craziest Africa ever contrived for your entertainment; not a wild beast ever misses a cue. Tarzan's mate has adapted herself to her husband's mode of living with true Victorian propriety; snug in her tree houses, she has a devoted gorilla for her personal maid. Everything is idyllic, though some old Mayfair friends of hers turn up and make trouble for a while. Directed by Cedric Gibbons and Jack Conway. (Regency; Sept. 3-5.)

THAT NIGHT IN RIO (1941)—Alice Faye could dance and she had a lush contralto voice (no lover of movie musicals will forget her "This Year's Kisses" in "On the Avenue"), but this low-camp musical is one of her co-starring jobs with Don Ameche, the cipher that sings, in a double role. That's twice nothing. Carmen Miranda—it would be a euphemism to describe her as volatile—sings "I Yi Yi Yi Yi Like You Very Much." Irving Cummings directed. The movie was remade ten years later as the Danny Kaye vehicle "On the Riviera;" those with really long memories may recall that it was done for the first time back in 1935 as a Maurice Chevalier-Merle Oberon musical called "Folies-Bergère." Of the three versions, "That Night in Rio" takes the booby prize. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 6.)

THE 39 STEPS (1935)—Hitchcock's suave, amusing spy melodrama, directed with so sure a touch that the suspense is charged with wit. Robert Donat and Madeleine Carroll are the pair handcuffed together until hate turns to love, Peggy Ashcroft and John Laurie are the couple joined together by marriage chains, and the villain is Godfrey Tearle, looking astonishingly like F.D.R. From the John Buchan novel. (Cinema Studio.)

3 WOMEN (1977)—Robert Altman's dream film about three women whose identities merge, one into another, and flow together. Shelley Duvall plays a beautiful know-it-all girl who is an attendant in a health spa for the aged, Sissy Spacek plays the novice she breaks in, and Janice Rule plays a silent artist who paints lunging profile figures on the sides of swimming pools. The film is full of Altman's overheards and murmurs, with a hallucinating quality typified by his recurring use of self-absorbed twins who never speak except to each other. A fine, musing film. (4/18/77) (Thalia; Sept. 1-2. . . . ¶ Art; starting Sept. 6.)

2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY (1968)—Stanley Kubrick's prophetic myth of ourselves thirty-three years later. He introduces the idea of an extraterrestrial intelligence that much diminishes mankind's small achievement in stumbling upward from apedom in the direction of computers. "2001" is some sort of great film, and often appallingly funny. (Gemini 2, and Rivoli; starting Sept. 1.)

AN UNMARRIED WOMAN—Paul Mazursky wrote and directed this buoyant, enormously friendly comedy about Erica (Jill Clayburgh) and her attempt to get back into "the stream of life" after her marriage of sixteen years breaks up. It's a tenderhearted feminist picture. With Michael Murphy, Lisa Lucas, Pat Quinn, Kelly Bishop, Linda Miller, Cliff Gorman, Mazursky himself, as Hal, and Alan Bates, whose fine comic, expansive performance as Saul Kaplan, a famous painter, overpowers the movie. (3/6/78) (Quad Cinema, Loews 83rd Quad, and Embassy.)

VIVA ITALIA!—An Italian anthology film in which at least four of the nine sketches are really fine, including a recklessly funny kitchen story of regional cooking gone berserk and a poignant piece about a hypocritical son luring his mother into an old-age home. The film stars Vittorio Gassman and Alberto Sordi and was directed by Mario Monicelli, Ettore Scola, and Dino Risi. Full of a particularly Italian sort of comic conviviality and, sometimes, a particularly Italian note of resolve in the face of distress. In Italian. (7/17/78) (Paris.)

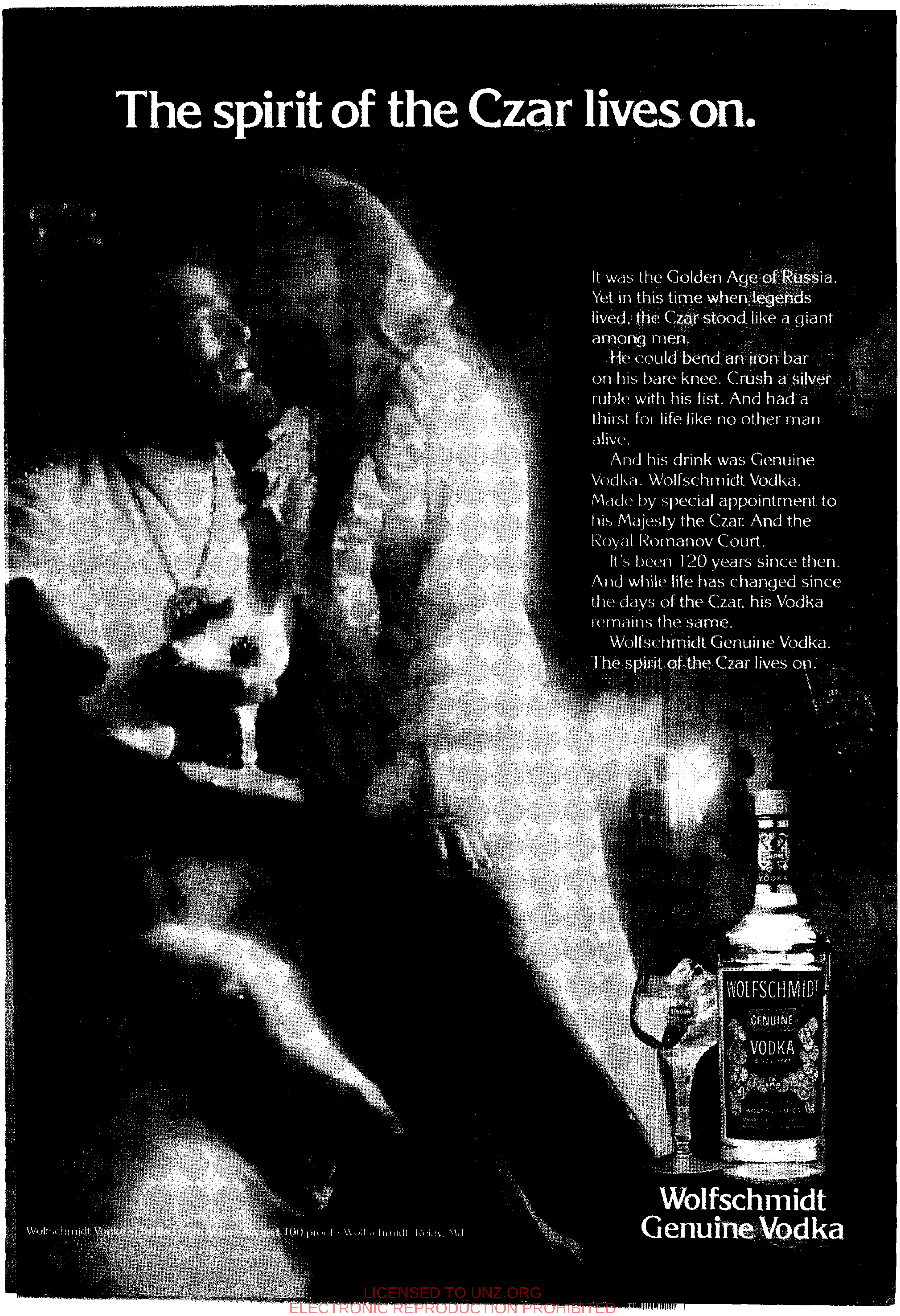
WE ALL LOVED EACH OTHER SO MUCH (1977)—An Italian film by Ettore Scola that is a comic commemoration of some of the reasons we find Italians congenial: bombast, the gift for abusive lifelong friendship, puff-chestedness, dignity in making gaffes, a talent for chaos, a genius with babies, intense solemnity about professionalism in anything from male nursing to car parking to film buffery to policemen dressed up like generals. Vittorio Gassman plays a well-heeled lawyer, Nino Manfredi plays a hospital orderly, Stefano Satta Flores plays a film buff blanched and bespectacled from all the films he has watched. In Italian. (6/6/77) (Cinema Village; Sept. 5.)

WHO'LL STOP THE RAIN—With Nick Nolte, Tuesday Weld, and Michael Moriarty; directed by Karel Reisz. (Reviewed in this issue.) (68th St. Playhouse, U. A. East, Festival, and Criterion.)

THE WOMEN (1939)—Clare Boothe Luce's ode to wisecracking cattiness, given the full, expensive M-G-M treatment in its first movie version. With Rosalind Russell, Joan Crawford, Paulette Goddard, Joan Fontaine, Mary Boland, Marjorie Main, Hedda Hopper, Margaret Dumont, Virginia Grey, and noble Norma Shearer, weeping, weeping. George Cukor directed. (Regency; starting Sept. 6.)

THE WONDERFUL CROOK (1975)—Gérard Depardieu as a petit-bourgeois Robin Hood, a man who commits robberies in order to meet the payroll of his family business, a small furniture factory. The Swiss writer-director, Claude Goretta, develops the small stresses and breaks of feeling; we know we're seeing a film made by artists. But Goretta's wheels grind so fine that we become impatient; the hero's arrest is our reprieve. In French. (3/21/77) (8th St. Playhouse; starting Sept. 7.)

YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN (1974)—A farce-parody of Hollywood's mad-scientist movies. You have to let this Mel Brooks comedy do everything for you, because that's the only way it works. If you accept the silly, zizzy obviousness, it can make you laugh helplessly. Gene Wilder is the old Baron's scientist-grandson, Peter Boyle is the new Monster, and Madeline Kahn is the scientist's fiancée, who becomes the Monster's bride. The picture is in black-and-white, which holds it visually close to the films it takes off from. It's Brooks's most sustained piece of moviemaking—the laughs never let up. (R.K.O. 59th St., R.K.O. 86th St., Quad Cinema, and Embassy 1.)



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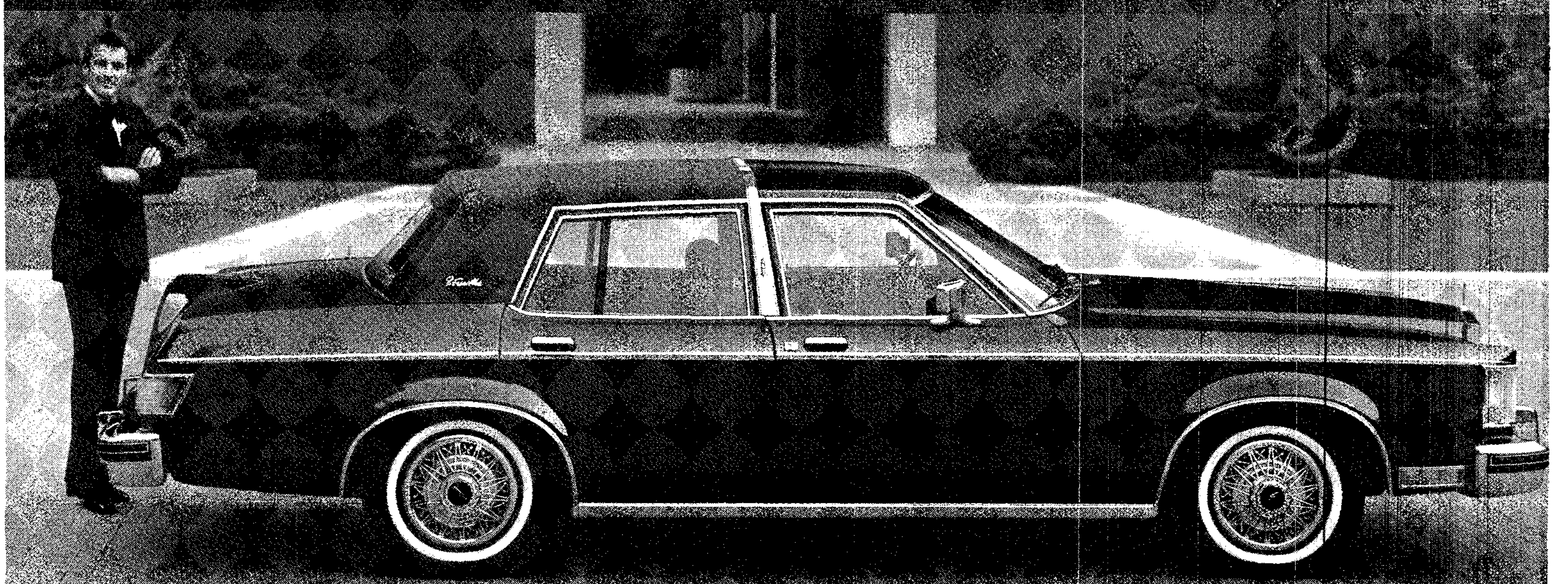

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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

A FRIEND writes:

Some mornings, when everybody else on the West Side is jogging, I like to sit on a bench near the Seventy-second Street entrance to the Park reviewing my major accomplishments of the previous day and making top-level decisions for the day ahead. One morning last week, I was sitting under one of the rustic wisteria arbors sorting through viable options (with my eyes closed so as not to see joggers) when a bee—I think—came out of the wisteria vines and buzzed at my face. I brushed it away, but it returned immediately. I got up and moved. It came after me. I got up again and began to walk. It pursued me. I ran down a path into the Park. It followed. I began to panic, waving my hands wildly over my head. When I could run no farther, I staggered to a halt. The bee had apparently given up; I stood gasping, bathed in sweat, trembling all over. Just then, a hearty, muscular jogger in green shorts trotted past me. He threw me a comradely, we're-all-in-this-together-fella smile. "Don't quit!" he cried, and jogged on.

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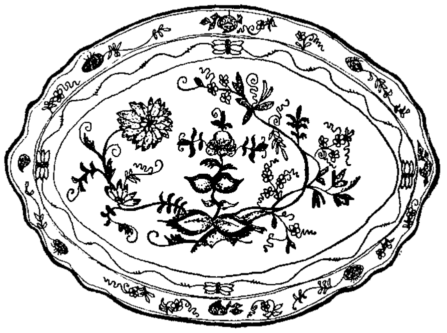
Filling the Vacuum

NEW YORK CITY'S three major newspapers—the *Times*, the *News*, and the *Post*—vanished from newsstands and doorsteps August 10th, the day after the sixteen-hundred-member New York Newspaper Printing Pressmen's Union No. 2 voted to strike in response to new work rules set forth by the papers' management which would reduce the number of people employed in the pressrooms. Management claimed that the cut in the work forces was necessary for a number of economic reasons—some of them having to do with computerized equipment that the three papers had recently installed—and the pressmen argued that management's claims were spurious. Negotiations began, hesitated, faltered, halted, recommenced, wavered, and sputtered, and within a few days other unions—including the Paper Handlers & Straighteners Union and the *Post's* unit of the Newspaper Guild—joined in the walkout. Meanwhile, the city was virtually newspaperless—but only briefly, for there are curious, intangible elements in a newspaper strike which make its effects on the public qualitatively different from those of almost any other kind of strike one might imagine: more than anything else, a newspaper strike affects the mind (a strike by laundry deliverers, say, would have quite different effects), and the mind can quickly grow restless. Since the combined circulation of the three struck papers is about three and a half million, at least that many people were suddenly cut off from habitual sources of mental commodities they considered vital—news stories, editorials, columnists, feature articles, sports reports, stock quotations, legal announcements, classified advertising, comic strips. In such circumstances, people begin to grow peevish.

We were reminded of the last major newspaper strike in this city, in the winter of 1962-63, which went on for a hundred and fourteen days. During that strike, there was an initial vacuum, after which six so-called interim papers were founded. (All the interim dailies disappeared when the strike ended, or soon after, but the *New York Review of Books*—a biweekly born during that strike—has endured.) This time, the vacuum began to be filled almost at once. Existing smaller papers began to expand—on August 15th, for instance, a weekly called the *Greenpoint Gazette* put out a "special strike edition"—and by the time the strike was a week old the first interim daily paper of 1978 had appeared. It was a tabloid called *City News*, and we dropped around to its offices, at 235 Park Avenue South, as its staff was preparing to put out its third issue. *City News* had been hastily organized by the Hagedorn Communications Corporation, which publishes a number of weekly papers, including *Town & Village* and the *Parkchester News*. The offices of *City News* were a few doors from the Hagedorn headquarters, on the building's fourth floor—in a couple of rooms painted in peeling green—and the atmosphere was a combination of rush-hour crush and collegiate pizzazz. Phones rang, shirtsleeved people typed, cigarette smoke wafted, beer and Pepsi were being drunk, food (looking suspiciously like airline dinners) was being brought in by messengers. Manning a phone on a front desk was John Melia, who is ordinarily a city-desk editor at the *News*, and he told us that *City News* was being swamped with calls from journalists who had been thrown out of work by the strike and were looking for temporary jobs.



When William Federici—a black-haired, dashing-looking man who is normally a *News* editor and reporter, and who is now the managing editor of *City News*—had finished giving instructions to some of his colleagues ("Do you remember how to write a police story?" he said to one veteran reporter, grinning), we collared him and asked him how things were shaping up.

"We're having a great time, but we're getting pretty tired," he said. "There's a great group spirit here. We have an editorial staff of fifteen, and they're all professionals—all Guild members—and it's really a sort of fusion effort. A couple of days after the strike was called, I sat down with some friends and we tried to figure out how we might put together an interim paper. It meant putting up money of our own, and most of us didn't *have* any money. Then I called Chris Hagedorn and asked him if he was interested in backing us financially, and things began to get moving. Our first issue had thirty-six pages, but now we've picked up a tremendous amount of advertising, and our Sunday paper will have a hundred and four pages and a press run of four hundred and fifty thousand. Several companies that normally provide home delivery of the *Times* have started delivering *City News*. But in *no* way do we consider ourselves some sort of 'strikebreaker paper.' Everything we do—including printing, which we've farmed out to four plants in New Jersey—is done by union members. In other words, we're giving jobs to union members who would otherwise be out of work. Our staff includes some of the best talent from the *News*, the *Times*, and the *Post*. By giving jobs to these people, we can hurt only the publishers, not the unions—and, as a matter of fact, a Guild official called this morning to congratulate us."

By the weekend of August 19th and 20th, the situation was developing some new ramifications. While several more interim papers were being predicted, *El Diario*—a Spanish-language paper, published in New York City, that is the largest foreign-language newspaper in the United States—had already begun printing six pages of news in English each day, including Reuters and U.P.I. releases. (*El Diario* has a complete television guide, and, although it still appears only in Spanish, even people who do not know that language should be able to handle listings like "Carol Burnett y Sus Amigos" and "Beisbol—Mets Contra Dodgers.") Most of the rumors had to do with who was *really* backing the new papers financially (the *Times*, the *News*, and the *Post* were all mentioned, with varying degrees of involvement being alleged, feared, decried, and denied), and some people predicted that at least one of the city's major papers would go under by the time the strike ended. We began to detect a sense of panic in the air.

On Sunday evening, we stopped in, on the third floor of the Empire State Building, at the offices of another interim tabloid—one that was about to hit the stands. Its name was the *Daily Metro*, and its offices were manned by only a couple of harried-looking men. They told us that most of the staff was at Sterling Graphic Arts, on East Forty-fifth Street, where the first issue was being set in type, so we went to that address. There we found a group of people sitting at long tables under fluorescent lights studying mockups and page proofs. In an inner office we found Frederick Iseman, the *Daily Metro's* publisher, who is tall, dark, and twenty-five. "I had been working as an assistant editor of the *Times'* Op-Ed page," he said. "The day after the strike started, I went down to the Strand Book Store and sold all my review copies of books—I really didn't know how I was going to survive. Then I began to think about putting out a paper. I got in touch with Metropolitan News—they're the largest distributors of newspapers and periodicals in this area—and we entered into discussions, which eventually fell through. Finally, I was able to get prepayment from distributors and from advertisers, so I decided to publish. It costs between fifty and sixty thousand dollars a day to put out a paper like this, so before you start you have to have *some* assurance that you're going to succeed. We'll have an A.P. wire, full stock reports, and some syndicated features. We're going to be printed on the presses of the *Daily Racing Form*, in Hightstown, New Jersey, and we're ready to go with a first issue of forty-four pages and a press run of four hundred thousand copies." Mr. Iseman went on to say that his staff, of thirty editorial and advertising people, came mostly from the *Times*, and that the *Metro's* editor was Alvin Davis, who is normally a *Times* editor. He added that Rupert Murdoch, who owns the *Post* as well as the *Village Voice* and *New York* magazine, had guaranteed that he would buy a hundred and fifty thousand copies of the *Metro* every day, to be distributed by the *Post's* home-delivery system, and that that guarantee had helped put the *Metro* in business.

On Monday, a third interim tabloid, the *Daily Press*, was launched, and we went to *its* headquarters, in a building on the corner of Thirty-first Street and Sixth Avenue. In an office on the twenty-fourth floor we found a blond woman sitting at a typewriter and a number of men running about. Some dialogue:

"Who's in charge of the business side of things? There's a man on the phone who wants to buy fifteen hundred papers."

"Where's our office manager?"

"You mean *who's* our office manager?"

"Where are Gary and Mark?"

"They're out. *Out*."

"What's the name of our typesetting company?"

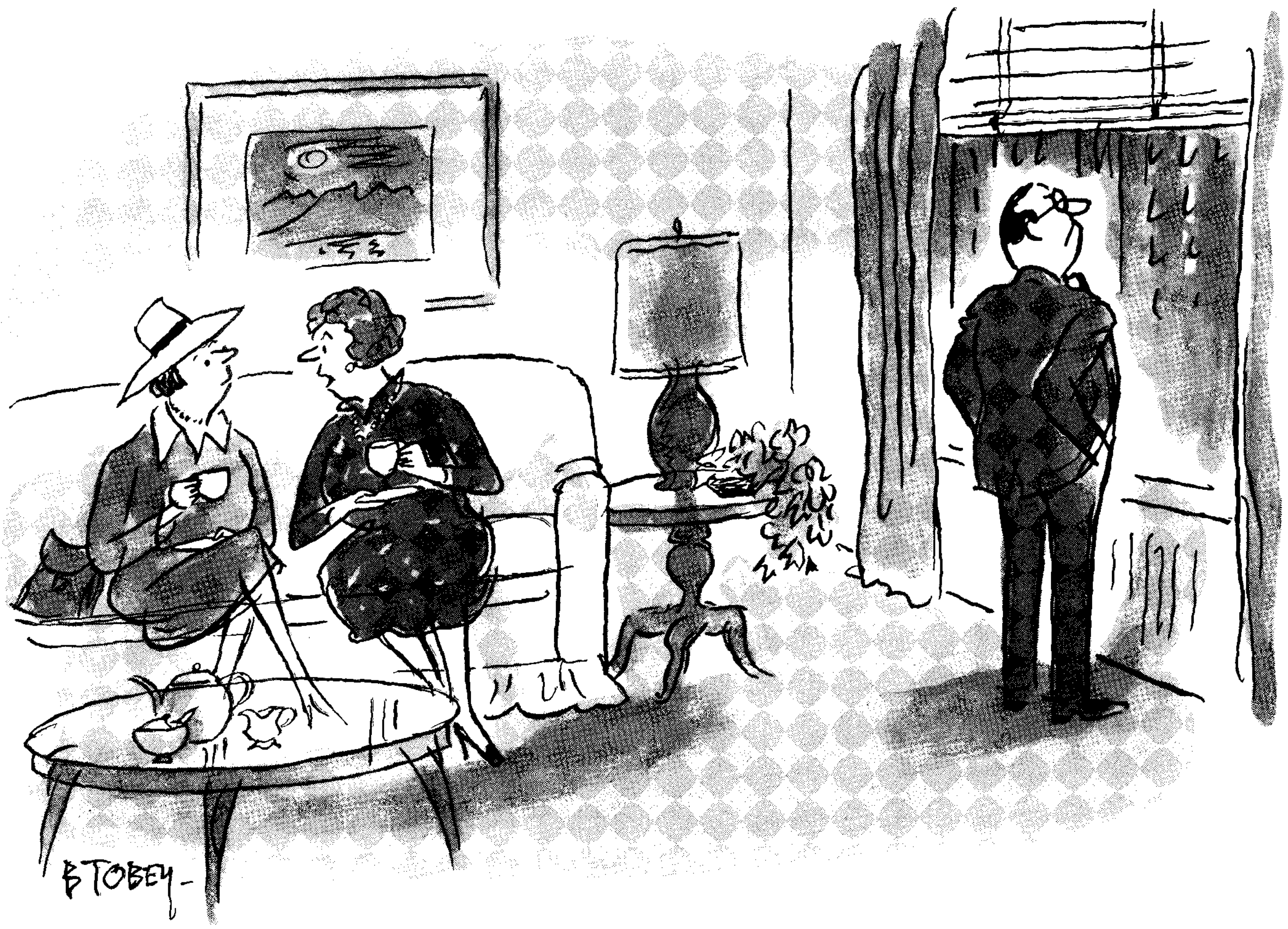
"This envelope won't fit into this typewriter. What am I going to do?"

"Crazy times, crazy solutions."

Eventually, we spoke with Mark Stern, who, with his older brother Gary, is publishing the *Daily Press*. Mark Stern is a blond, tanned man of thirty-two, and he was wearing a three-piece vanilla-colored suit. He explained that he and his brother had published an interim paper during a newspaper strike in Detroit in 1964, that it had been very successful, and that they had gone on to put out similar interim papers during a strike in Baltimore in 1965 and a strike in Detroit in 1967 that lasted almost nine months. "I live in Fort Lauderdale, where I publish two weekly papers," he said. "Gary lives in Detroit, where he's in the investment business. I learned about this newspaper strike in New York only after it started—by watching a newscast. I immediately telephoned Gary, and we decided to come here and do what we had done before. We want to put out a quality newspaper to fill a void, and also to hire people who are out of work. We've got a staff of forty-five, headed by Don Flynn, our managing editor, who is normally a reporter at the *News*. Our initial press run will be about two hundred thousand copies. When you have a winner and a winning formula, which we do—well, let's say I'm operating this paper as if there were no competition in town."

As the strike continued, we spoke with more newspaper people around the city:

On a visit to the offices of the *Soho Weekly News*, on Spring Street, we spoke with Al Ellenberg, its executive editor (young, long-haired, blue-jeaned), who told us that his paper was including more general news than before, that circulation and advertising had jumped considerably, and that he had temporarily added to his staff Howard Thompson, of the *Times*; Peter Freiberg and Eric Fettmann, who are both former *Post* reporters; and Clyde Haberman, who is normally one of the editors of "The Week in Review" in the Sunday *Times*. (Clyde Haberman remarked to us that the expanded news coverage being offered by most of the local TV stations during the strike was "turning out to be the same old empty-headed stuff, only now—without any newspapers to back it up—it really *shows*.")



"Actually, he's mad at President Carter, Secretary Blumenthal, George Meany, Mayor Koch, and me."

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William Ryan, the publisher of the *Village Voice*, on University Place, told us that, unlike most of the weeklies, the *Voice* did not plan to alter its character during the strike, but that advertising had increased by almost a hundred per cent and its press run had increased from a hundred and fifty thousand to three hundred thousand. "The *Voice* has a style we want to maintain," he said. "We're primarily interested in keeping the readers we already have."

Robert Trentlyon, who is the publisher, from offices on West Twenty-fourth Street, of community-oriented weeklies called the *Westsider*, the *Chelsea Clinton News*, and the *East Side Express*, told us that his papers were now appearing twice a week, with greater news coverage than usual, but added, "If the new dailies start picking up the slack, we'll go back to normal. There's a tendency right now for everybody to say, 'My God, it's our main chance—let's expand.' But, for our part, we don't want to go *crazy* over this thing."

In Brooklyn, in a storefront on Atlantic Avenue, we found Michael Armstrong, who is the publisher and editor-in-chief of neighborhood weeklies called the *Phoenix* and the *Villager*. He told us that he had taken on Gary Hoenig and Michael Katz, who are on the sports staff of the *Times*, and Robert Crane and Tom Raftery, who are reporters for the *News*. During the first week of the strike, he said, he had converted his papers into dailies, but, for various reasons, had subsequently decided to put out two issues a week for the duration, each of which would include general news coverage.

"For the duration"—that locution, reminiscent of war and other dire emergencies, cropped up all over the city. On East Eighty-second Street, Edward R. Kayatt, the publisher of a weekly called *Our Town*, told us that he had increased his press run from a hundred and thirty-one thousand to two hundred and five thousand.

Over at Broadway and Sixtieth, Stephen Burzon, the publisher of a weekly called *Wisdoms Child*, told us he had instituted a TV section, which would probably continue even after the duration.

Still another interim paper, the *Graphic*, was expected to appear at any minute, and a bewildered-looking mid-town news dealer said to us, "We've already been billed for the *Graphic*, but we haven't received any copies of it. Just give me my *old* papers back."

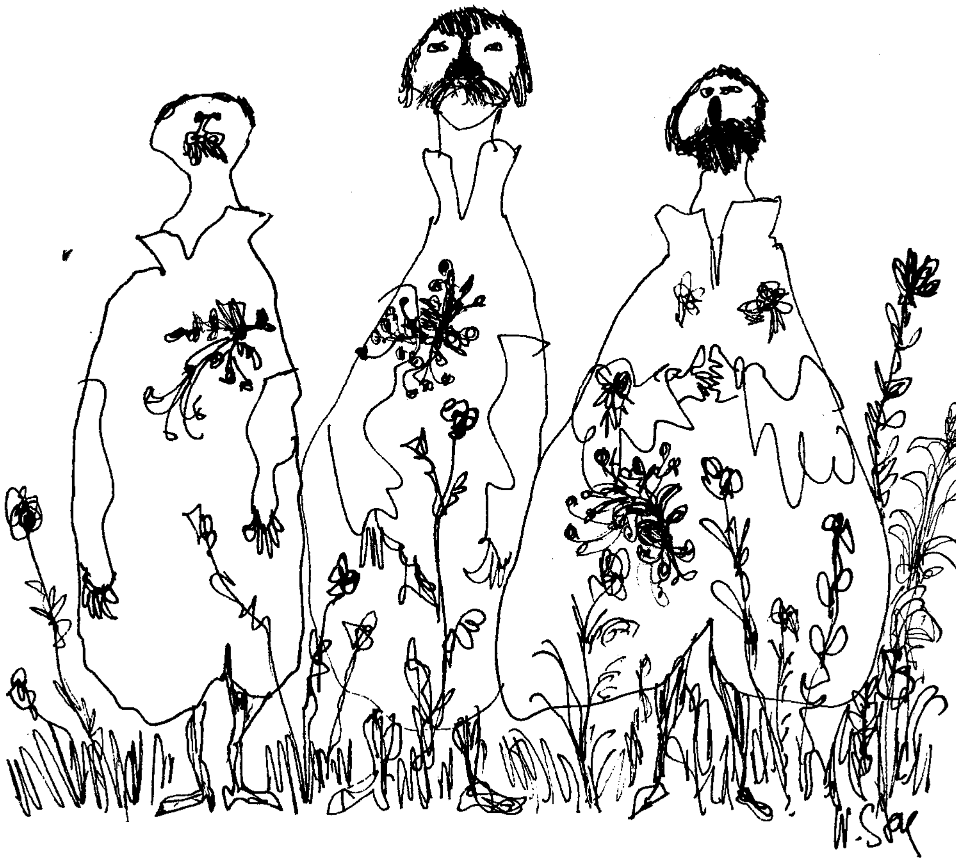
Early in the strike, the *Amsterdam News*, which serves the black community, and whose motto is "America's Largest Weekly," ran an editorial saying, "A newspaper strike is a terrible thing to see. We are left with the feeling that neither the workers, through their unions, nor the management wins in the end. Worse still, the greater loser is the public at large. . . . It hurts us to see the three dailies in this city closed down. Yet and still, while mourning the loss, we feel a strong need to fill the vacuum that the *Times*, *News*, and *Post* now have left." One day last week, we went up to Harlem and stopped in at the offices of the *Amsterdam News*, at Eighth Avenue and 125th Street, where we spoke with John L. Procope, the paper's publisher, and Bryant Rollins, its executive editor. Mr. Rollins, who is a genial, outgoing man, explained that he saw the paper's primary objective as providing black people with all the news they need, and that it has as a secondary objective attracting the attention of white readers. "For the first time in the sixty-nine-year history of the *Amsterdam News*, we've come out with a Sunday edition," said Mr. Procope, a distinguished-looking man whose hair is tinged with gray. "In fact, it's the first time that any black paper in this country has put out a Sunday edition. Our aim—during the strike—is to run about fifty per cent black news and fifty per cent general news. We've always felt that more white people should read our paper."

As the strike entered its third week, we stopped in at the Doral Inn, on Lexington Avenue—where the newspaper negotiations were being held—one afternoon to see what was happening. In the lobby, we ran into George McDonald (wiry, busy-looking), who is the president of the Allied Printing Trades Council, consisting of ten newspaper unions. He told us he had asked union lawyers to look into reports that, in one way or another, the three large papers were secretly financing the interim tabloids. We also spoke with Kenneth E. Moffett (tall, gray-suited, buoyant-looking), the deputy director of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, who is acting as the mediator in the current talks. "Do you want to know what's *really* happening?" he said, with a smile. "We're still very much at the beginning of things. In a few minutes, we're all going upstairs to start today's negotiations, but they're really only a matter of trying to decide what we're going to talk about. Some people are taking bets on whether the settlement will come before or after Labor Day. *I* wouldn't even hazard a guess. You might say we're still discussing the shape of the table."

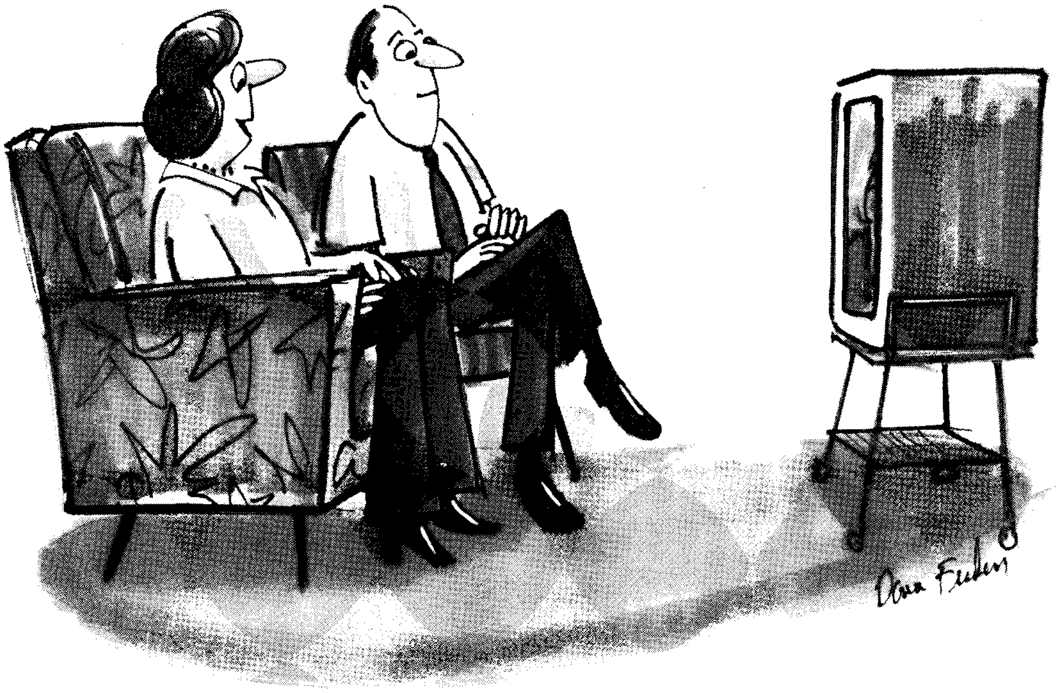
Zubin Mehta

WHEN Zubin Mehta conducted his first public concert as Music Director of the New York Philharmonic last week, both the orchestra and the vast audience (the concert was given in Central Park before an estimated hundred and forty thousand people) were wondering how he would handle his new job. The Mehta personality—magnetic, flamboyant, outspoken, musically meticulous—had preceded the actual Mehta to New York, and the question in everyone's mind was whether or not the chemical reaction that can fuse a conductor and an orchestra into a single music-making entity would take place. The program consisted of familiar selections—Wagner's "Rienzi" Overture, Ravel's "La Valse," and Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony. Halfway through the opening "Rienzi," a certain mellow quality that is one of the hallmarks of the Mehta style became evident, and it was clear that the orchestra had begun to adjust to its new boss. At the end of the concert, the audience gave the orchestra and its conductor an ovation, the musicians looked delighted, and the Philharmonic executives—standing in a group behind the big outdoor shell—seemed to be enormously relieved.

The day before the concert, we had travelled up to Lincoln Center to observe Mr. Mehta's very first official encounter with his new orchestra—a rehearsal on the small, crowded stage of Alice Tully Hall. (The Philharmonic had been bumped from its home in Avery Fisher Hall by the Mostly Mozart Festival.) The encounter involved a good deal of polite testing on both sides. At precisely 10 A.M., Albert Webster, a tall, bearded man who is the Philharmonic's Managing Director, appeared at the front of the stage to make an official speech of welcome. Then Mr. Mehta, a short, compact, muscular man with the tightly curled hair and aquiline features of an Assyrian bas-relief, walked briskly through the rows of cellos, shook hands with the concertmaster, and mounted the podium. There was a palpable tension in the hall. "I haven't had a new job in a long time," he said, in a clear, English-accented voice. "But I know you already, and I've been waiting for this moment for two and a half years. Believe me, I was pretty shaky yesterday, but now I've calmed down and I really look forward to this rehearsal. Let's get started." He gave a brisk downbeat for Ravel's "La Valse," which begins with a deep murmur of string basses, a whisper of cellos, and a bassoon solo. After a few bars, he stopped, and looked around at the orchestra. "I would like the first four basses to play pizzicato," he said. "Also, basses, the second and third part of the two trills should be softer." A few minutes later, when the basses were accompanying the violas, Mr. Mehta stopped them again and said, "Sometimes I've done this with one bass, because if you use too many you get a blur. How many are doing it?" Four bass players raised their hands, and Mr. Mehta looked skeptical. "Why don't you change the bow on the F," he said, "so the accent can make the passage clearer. And then, if you could *all* play also piano. . . ." The musicians began again, and Mr. Mehta gradually swept them up into the complex patterns of Ravel's mordant apotheosis of the Viennese waltz, pausing from time to time to adjust a transition, correct



The Three Franellinis



"I'm glad to see Harry Reasoner looks the same on CBS as he did on ABC."

a dynamic, or redefine an entrance. ("Cellos and basses, that pizzicato chord two bars before thirty-four sounds forced. Maybe we can taper down. . . . Brass, how staccato can you play those triplets? . . . Basses, don't lose the downbeat after fifty-four; it's the only impulse that is carried right through the piece. . . . Bassoon, more legato after sixty-one; it helps the strings.") As "La Valse" reached its turbulent climax, Mr. Mehta seemed to become intoxicated by the collective sound of the orchestra. He leaned over the violins, smiling ferociously, his knees bent, his right foot stamping out the rhythm on the podium; whirled in a semi-crouch to encourage the cellos with his mouth open in a silent scream; and flung his body back in an arch, both arms outstretched above his head, to punctuate each shattering crescendo. During these gymnastics, he was also balancing the orchestral voices with great care, giving precise instrumental cues to produce crisp attacks, and maintaining a clear, rapid beat with the baton clenched in his right hand. As we watched and listened, an invisible current seemed suddenly to flow between musicians and conductor. When the orchestra took a break at the end of the piece, most of the tension in the hall had vanished.

During the break, we remarked to Mr. Mehta that we had heard it said that "La Valse" was always considered a bit tricky to conduct, and asked him why this was so.

"After playing the right notes in the right tempo, it must have a little perfume to it," he told us. "And it has to be organized in a certain sense, so you can grasp the subtleties that lie between the notes. To do that, the conductor has to be flexible enough to encourage the orchestra to play with its own imagination."

Next, we asked Mr. Mehta for a brief rundown on his current musical activities.

He replied, "I will spend five and a half months with the Philharmonic during the season; three months in Israel, since I'm still the Music Director of the Israel Philharmonic; a month in Los Angeles as guest conductor of my former orchestra; and the rest of the time doing operas and concerts in other places. I have 'Fledermaus' and 'Salome' at Covent Garden around Christmas, a couple of weeks with the Berlin Philharmonic next spring, and a complete 'Ring' in Florence, starting with 'Rheingold' next May. Then I will do another 'Ring' cycle, in Vienna, starting in 1980. Although I learned the Verdi operas to please Mr. Bing when I was conducting at the Met, Wagner and Mozart are the operatic composers closest to me—which is not surprising, since my whole training was in Vienna. It's being said that our repertory this season is on the conservative side, but I don't think my part of it is particularly conservative. We're doing a lot of Schubert, because it's his anniversary, but I was also planning to present a new piece by Boulez—it has just had to be postponed, because it won't be finished in time. And you have to realize that it's very difficult to persuade colleagues to come to New York and do avant-garde works. They all say, 'I'm doing them in my town. Let me come to New York and enjoy myself.' Another problem with guests is that they all want to play Mahler. If I gave everyone a free choice, we'd have a Mahler festival every year."

"How do you feel about living in New York?" we inquired.

"I'm delighted with the idea," Mr. Mehta said. "For me, this city is a permanent music festival. I think ahead to all the times when I'm not working and I will be able to hear my friends play at Carnegie or Tully or Avery Fisher. You know, in every other big American city the conductor is virtually marooned. When he's conducting, his work goes wonderfully, but when he's not conducting, except for the guest conductor and the soloist with his orchestra there's really not much else going on, musically speaking. Here you have a visiting orchestra every week, each one very well prepared, each one playing its absolute best."

"How would you describe the Philharmonic?" we asked.

"People always want me to compare orchestras as if they were baseball teams," said Mr. Mehta. "Which is silly and impossible. The Philharmonic is a virtuoso orchestra that can play practically everything in the standard repertoire exceedingly well. In these first rehearsals, we are just feeling each other out. I am making only small adjustments, because, after all, we have three years to get to know each other well. I still cannot look at the stage and say, 'That's my orchestra,' because I feel that I'm somewhere between a Music Director and a guest conductor. Maybe in a few months I can look at them and feel that I'm really part of the family."

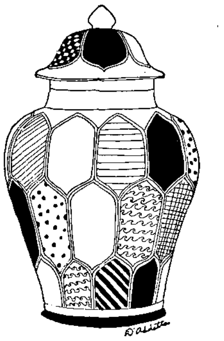
"Do they ever frighten you?" we asked.

"No," replied Mr. Mehta, with a seraphic smile that held a hint of iron. "And I hope I don't frighten them, either."

STARTING

ANNA's friends said that soon she would meet someone wonderful. It had to be. She worked as a costumer in a theatre and knew a lot of people. Yet she went to parties alone and said, "It's more of an adventure." But that was mere bluff. The truth was, she had no choice, and she was beginning to feel increasingly separate. She laughed when her friends foretold this new adventure. She did not believe it or disbelieve it. An Indian clairvoyant told her the man's initials and his occupation, and she felt it as a very pleasant certainty in the pit of her being. But she did not hurry toward it. She was learning.

When he came through her door, she did not see him as her promised one, but she did see him as someone vital, appealing, and very watchful. He sat on the floor, apart. He was called Bobby. Her friend Ken had brought him. Ken was a director, and she had often worked with him. They had been through many a scrape together and had nursed each other through many an emotional storm. So there they all were, friends, having a drink. Her teen-age sons were in the room, and it was a question of chatter, music in the background, two young people playing a game of cards, and herself frequently jumping up to pass nuts, to pass olives, to refill the glasses. It was a beautiful spring evening and the sunlight poured, as if in heraldry, through the golden gauzelike curtains. Happiness prevailed. The double freesias in the vases were the color of clotted cream, and when he put his face to them he smiled at the absence of perfume. Shop flowers, she had to say, do not have a perfume.



"Is that a fact?" He put the question to the air. Although apart, he seemed to be registering everything. He would focus and narrow his eyes, as if considering. He looked at the pictures on her coral walls and admitted that he never looked at pictures but that these were quite something. One picture dominated a whole wall. It was a wheat field and so convincing that the high golden stalks seemed to move occasionally to a breeze or the reaper's scythe. Then he asked who the singer was on the record and looked at the dust jacket to make note of the label. It was the same with the wine. He repeated its name and the name of the French shippers.

She thought that perhaps he was complimenting her or perhaps he was making note of these things for his own particular advantage. Her impression was that he was at once sure and unsure. He had a beautiful physical poise but was canny about what he would say. We often ask strangers the bluntest questions. So she did. She asked him what he wanted in life, and he whistled and gave a sudden grin.

"Just to make you laugh, that's all," he said, and looked at her to see if he had made a conquest. It was as if he were drinking her in. The evening drifted on and on, and no one wished to leave, although they all had different appointments. They might have been placed under a spell. He and Ken were going to a play, and yet they refused to budge and refused to absorb directions on how to get there. In the end, they left.

WHEN she next saw him, a couple of nights later at an after-theatre party, Bobby said how nervous she had been and she said that she was always nervous—nervous even when her cleaning woman brought her little boy for tea and they all made cinnamon toast and munched it and joked. He was an American working in England, and he had been in a hotel room for ten days and was beginning to feel cooped up. He mimed it. She saw him as a caged monkey and asked if he had been born in the Year of the Monkey according to the Chinese calendar. He did not know. His eyes were a cornflower blue and sometimes flashed like galvanized metal. The color was arresting and it fluctuated, as if it were dye that deepened and became pale at intervals, depending on his mood.

They talked about strange cities, strange hotels, and the random excitement of being alone and knowing no one. They talked of the false ecstasy attached to ordering prawns and a cocktail brought to one's room. In her New York hotel, she said, what she remembered most was the single red rose on her breakfast tray each morning. He asked which hotel it was, and laughed because indeed they might have met. He mentioned other haunts of his and she knew them, too, because she had been taken there. They were both gypsies. When people talk, it is usually something else they are trying to say, and he said that on that first meeting he was asking her not to be nervous, to come out with them, and she said that she was saying not to get near, not to trespass.

BUT they met again and again, always with Ken, who was the butt of their jokes and the witness to their budding attraction. Bobby would take her hand as if it were the most natural thing in the world and whirl it clockwise and counterclockwise, and they would look at each other as if trying to read faces. They were at once friendly and wary. She took Bobby and Ken for a walk in Hyde Park and showed them the difference between primroses and grape hyacinths. With regard to nature, they were barbarians. At the Serpentine, they all watched as the ducks squabbled over bread. Their attention was caught by two cocks who were having a hardy battle. One or the other of the combatants would disappear, only to reëmerge drenched and more pugnacious. It was the courting season.

"Terrific," he said, and flinched as if nature were a puzzle to him. The landscape where he lived was desert, and he described going out there on his motorcycle to work off his fret, and she saw a man with a coil inside his chest. Then she took them to where all the birds congregated and sang, some to woo, some to compete, some to plead, and some, as she said, to serenade the people.

"The birds at juke in the bushes," she said.

What did that mean?

She told him that she had learned that in Ireland, read it in a schoolbook long ago.

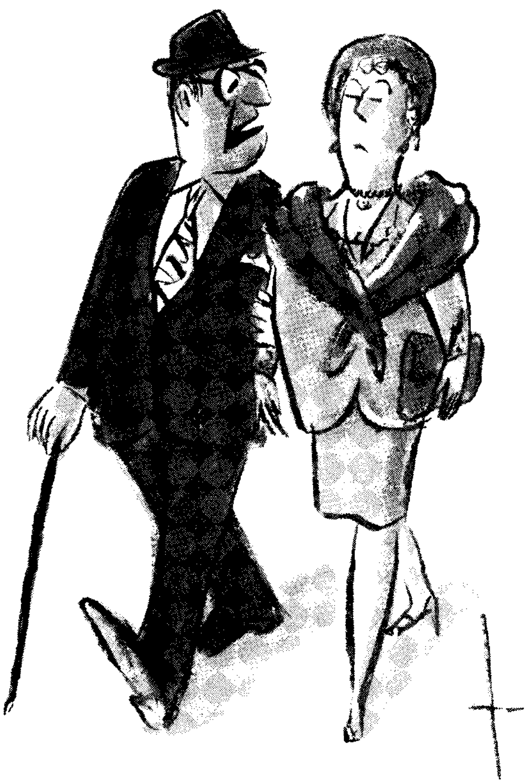
"I'LL take you to Ireland," he said to her late one night. Ken had gone home, and she and he were in his hotel room, talking, talking. They sat close together, like children, with hands held, fingers locking and interlocking, telling each other snatches of things. Once, in a bar, he had broken twenty willow-pattern plates. Once, in a waiting room, he had acted Ionesco's "The Chairs."

By then she knew that he was married, that he was estranged from his wife, that he was a little in love with Anna, a little in awe, and that he was not running to her, he was not doing that.

"Why take me to Ireland?" she said, again probably meaning something else, probably meaning don't.

" 'Cause you're always taking me somewhere," he said.

There was an obstacle. She did not really want to sleep with him, not be-



"There is a perfect example of what is wrong with this country today."

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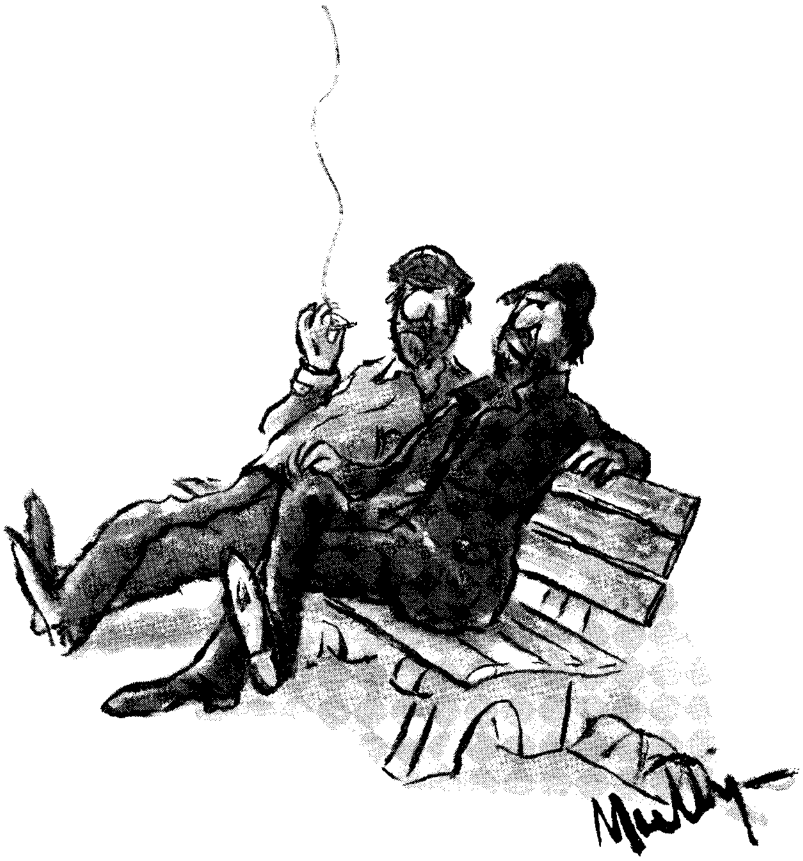

"There is a perfect example of what is wrong with this country today."

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cause she did not want to sleep with him but because she was reluctant and she was afraid. What is more, she had lost the habit. She was in her late thirties, divorced, her children were grown, and though she was consumed with desire it had gone underground and moved in her like a wraith and sometimes spoke in dreams. It was there, but secretive.

He guessed what was running through her mind. "No way I would," he said, as if sleeping with someone was too strenuous and too much of a commitment. "It's probably very nice, but I like this." And he dangled their two hands in the air and seemed pleased with what he saw. So going to Ireland was simple, and he would arrange it all.

THEY arrived at the hotel in the evening. The avenue was miles long, with big redwood trees on either side. It curved round and round, and she was breathless to get a view. A sally hedge and cropped yews skirted the bounds of a beautiful formal garden. The rhododendrons were out. Like torches of deep red reaching higher and higher to the heavens. The cut stone was covered over with a thin cape of bronze lichen, and the corners of the building curved into little horseshoe gazebos. The lake beyond was the color of dun earth. The trunks of the trees were reflected thinly, down, down into the water, thin and precarious as flamingos' legs. She saw it all—the mooring place for the boat, the green-domed boathouse, and the steps that led to the front porch with two men or, rather, figures in armor—and she thought, Do I deserve this?

The season had just begun and the porters were full of affability, and their welcome seemed to say that it was nice to have donned their blazers and their black bow ties to greet new faces. The other new faces, as far as she could see, were somewhat tentative. It was as if people like her had just stepped in to a masked party and were unsure. Bobby made up for all that by scanning everything, by looking closely at the huge photographs that decked the lounge, by having a quick drink at the bar as they passed by. He juggled some nuts in the air before popping them into his mouth. He gave her a sip of his bourbon. She walked toward one of the huge, blown-up photographs and beheld a bleached sea road strewn with small bleached stones. It spoke of hardship, of poverty.

That was my childhood, she thought, and conceived of a bicycle or a workman or a dog—something to make it human. His childhood was New York, second-generation Irish—men with sombre personalities until the moment they drank. When they drank, they changed character, he said. He kissed her in front of the picture, in front of the other guests, in front of the curly-haired barman, and in front of her awkward self.

He was excited and like a schoolboy playing truant. Then he took her wrist and they went up in the tiny lift, speculating about the room. It was a suite. As they came through the door, the first thing she could see was another bar reflected in the window opposite, then all of a sudden the porter switched on the bar light and the bottles multiplied and were reflected in the rear mirrors. She could see how barmen might be proud of their wares and how they might keep their mirrors very clean and dust the necks of the bottles and never let the labels be soiled or smeared the way the pages of her cookery book were. The room was so huge that they walked round it and met and embraced and separated, and told each other more stories, or snippets of stories. It was like shorthand. It was their way of discovering each other. Her stories with the merest tincture of pain, like cochineal invading an icing, and his with a zaniness and a certain subversiveness.

Very soon, menus were brought and he lolled over her shoulder as he debated what they should have. They would have everything. They would get plump together, they would jog together in the beautiful grounds, they would go boating together to the island across the way, and they would swim at midnight. The waiter said a boat could be arranged but they would get their death of cold if they were to swim or even paddle.

When the waiter had gone, Bobby told her a story about a cat and an eagle, and she listened with all her attention. It was a fable, really. It involved danger and it involved dependence. The lamplight was very soft and so was their mood. The rooks were cawing in the trees outside and the time seemed to exhale its own passing, so perfect and unruffled it all was. He got up and stretched.

"I would have gone crazy if I hadn't met you," he said.

"Do I resemble someone else?" she asked.

"No one else, absolutely no one else," he said.

There was something she had to tell him, but she did not know how. She blurted it. How she saw a doctor.

"Oh, a shrink," he said, and dazzled her by totting up the amount that he, his wife, his eldest child, and his several girlfriends had spent in that department. She had to tell him then of a dream she had had that was shocking in its simplicity. She had dreamed of sleeping with her doctor, had supplied every detail of it—the folded sheet, the red herringbone stitching on the rim of the blanket, his breathing, the subtlety of their reach, the beauty of their closeness—and how then the doctor merged into her father and then returned to being himself again, and how as they made love the doctor's face floated between being his own and being her father's and that no matter which face she kissed the other was behind it, like a shadow, floating, and the benefit of those two faces was totally and uncannily satisfying. It made one ask for nothing more. She wanted him to know that, but she did not know why she wanted him to know it. She was by the window looking out. Night had fallen.

"I love when you move," he said.

"What race would you think I was?" she said.

"Russian," he said.

FINDING A DEPTH: NORTH CHANNEL, LAKE HURON

I

These North Channel islands are forgotten children
of the glacier. Some sink
in beards of grass.
Others, like oases, sprout umbrella trees out of rock.
Clusters, buds in the center of water.
So many, so alike that each, heavily wooded,
each, stony-beached, becomes the other.

At a family reunion, when I was a child,
I remember being spun, then
groping to find cousins, brother
in the dark behind my blindfold,
then crying when I stood alone in the field.

II

The beach is so rocky I must
wear shoes for protection. Stones
clatter and crawl under my feet. White and flat,
they blend like a big Irish family.

I bend, pick one up, and flicking my wrist
send it out over the lake.
Another and another.
I am not very adept at this game. Still,
one comes alive and with five
great slanting skips goes far before sinking.

III

In this cove, with only this boat
anchored in the sunlight, I sit facing reeds.
The Channel beach at my back is piled
with flat white stones.

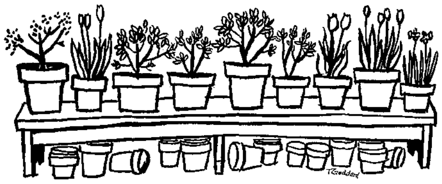
I have been watching a beaver glide in and out
of shadow. It occurs to me
that a person, if she wanted, could disappear here.
The name and position lost
like a misplaced photo from an album,
the loss felt here, in the chest,
a flat sinking into self.

—JUDITH MINTY

* * *

"Good," she said, and he laughed because he had been jesting with her. She was the race she was, every particle of it. Eyes, bones, hair, inflammability. They were alike. She felt that, too. Brother and sister. Kin.

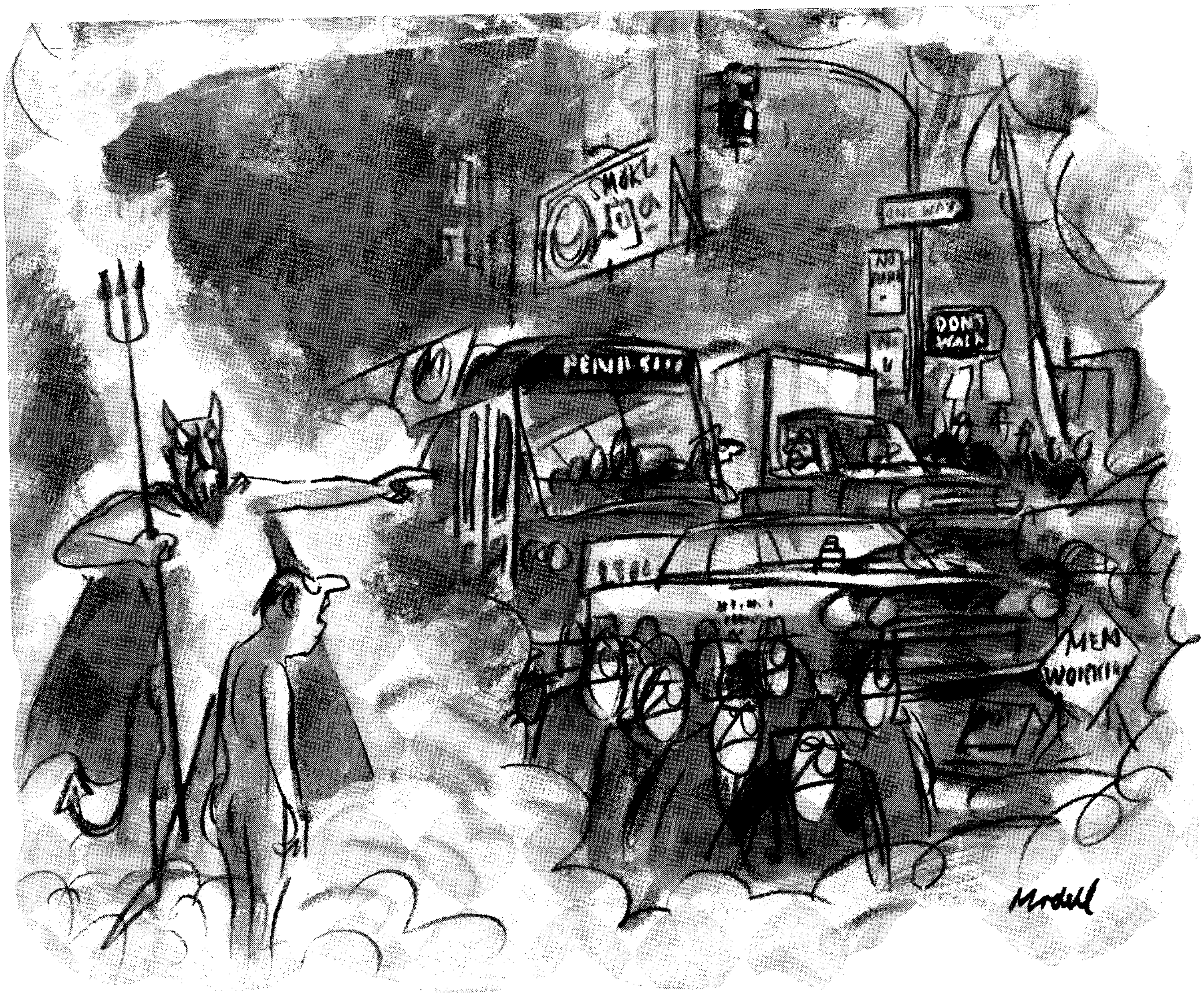
BEFORE dinner, they went outside to fetch a book he had left behind in the hired car. The place was a thicket of darkness. On the path, they stumbled and clung to each other and did not know which direction to take. There was the wonderful cleansing sound of rushing water, and they both said that they had not felt so well in years. They groped toward the car park. He put the key in the door and, upon opening it, an inner light came on. On the back seat was an attaché case, which he snapped open, and in it were a tin of boiled sweets, a lady's knickers, and a pair of black evening gloves.



"Come on!" he said, and accused her of being responsible for it. But it was not their car at all. Their key opened several car doors, and each time they laughed, because neither of them could remember the number of their car, its color, or even where they had parked it. They had been so engrossed in each other that they had forgotten.

"What did you see as we drove here?" she said.

"You," he said, and then added, "Stone walls, small fields, and a lot of bog."



"Oh, no! You mean this is it?"

• •

She said that she had seen a statue of a saint in the upstairs window of a pub and that its head had come off and was resting on its shoulder, and did he think it was kept on by glue or by persistence?

He said probably persistence and that she was a wonderful person and to hell with his car and his swanky book on Zen Buddhism. Some of the hotel windows were lit up, and soft red lights beckoned from the stone front.

THE wine she most loved was on the table and there were five fluted daffodils set into a piece of green sponging that was too bulky for the small vase. The curtains and wall coverings were a sumptuous red, and in the recess where they sat they could see the garden outside and a fire at the end of the room glowing.

"You're smart," he said. "I have decided you're smart."

She looked at him and wondered. She thought, He thinks I am vivid, I think I am dull. She thought, He probably sleeps like a baby, I toss and turn. She thought she was not going to be able to carry it off, but there he was disarming her, telling her something else.

"What would you say is your biggest handicap?" she said.

"Thinking," he said. "I'm always thinking about thinking, and not doing much real thinking."

"What if I said that I didn't want to be here?"

"I'd think about it and I'd start thinking that you would think you wanted to be here."

"Could you?" she said, so imploringly.

"No, but I wish I could," he said, so sadly.

She thought, It will be all right, it will take a day or two, but I will adjust, I will get used to being with someone, I will be funny, I will bloom.

"Tell me about your kids," she said, realizing that his language was infecting hers.

"They're not as good as yours," he said, " 'cause I'm not as good as you."

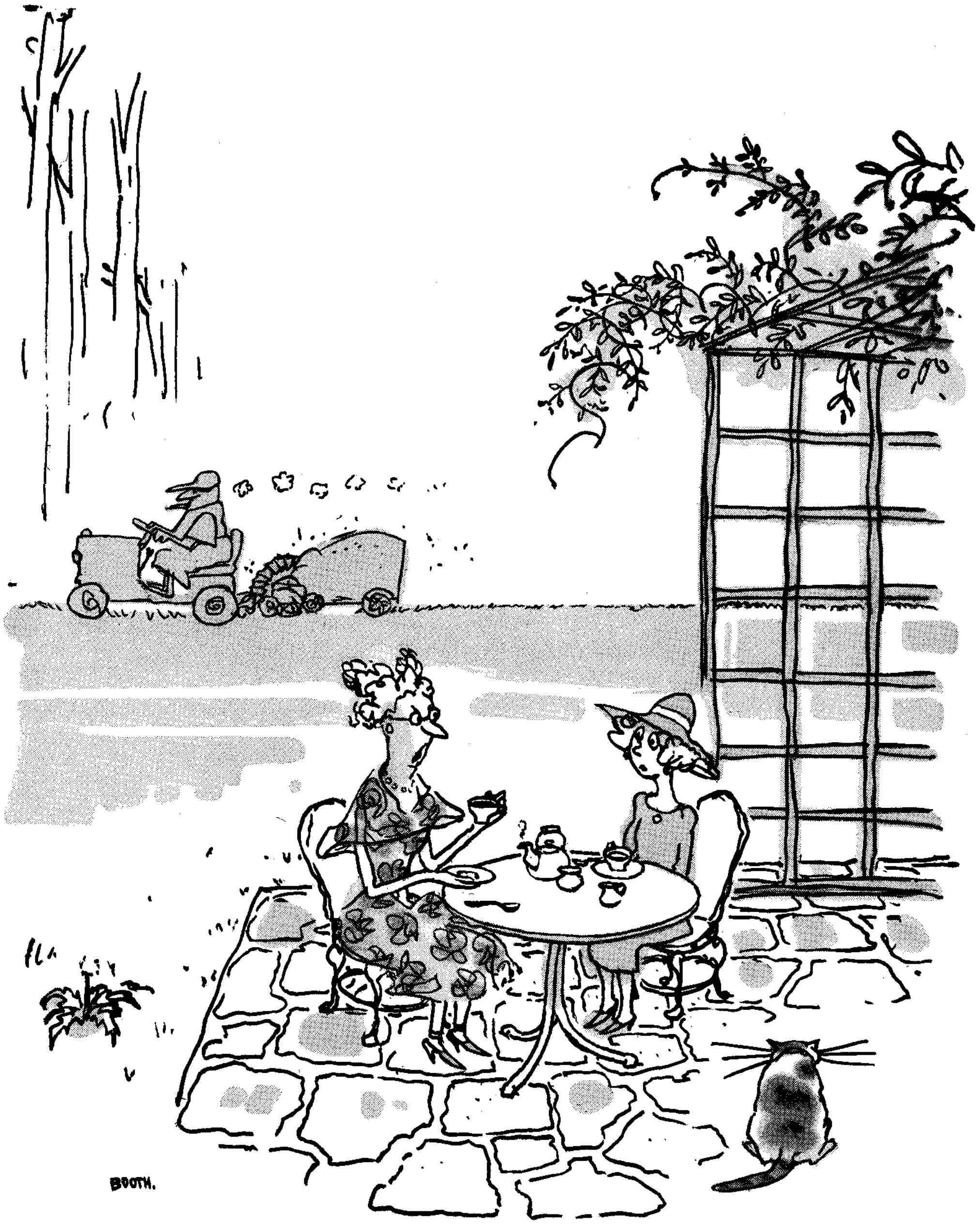
"You miss them?"

"No," he said. "They do racing and stuff like that. . . . They're on their way. . . . I wouldn't want them to be late starters like me." He gave a little smile that was almost rueful. She thought then of starting. Were he and she starting, and if so what? Would these three days bring them nearer or farther from one another? Where were the boulders, the thorns, the gorges—where were they, and when would they loom into view?

He asked what excited her. She said did he mean sexually.

He said any way.

She said the lifting of a skirt was more exciting than two bare bodies, more suggestive. Then they discussed



"Newspaper reporters always describe Hereford as unflappable. Newspaper reporters don't live with Hereford. I do. He's not."

films they loved, or moments of films that they loved, and they were almost obstreperous in pronouncing their own choices as best.

She asked if he knew what Keats said when he saw his beloved take off her glove. " 'Snared by the ungloving of thine hand.' "

"God!" he said, delighted, and then added that he would have to read Keats and a lot of other stuff to keep up with her! They were eating fresh poached salmon, and he said one thing he had never done was fishing. She said it made people very patient, and he twitched his nose at that.

"But you fish the brain," she said quietly.

"Right," he said, gladdened that she had noticed that trait in him.

Her fingernails dug into her left palm.

ALWAYS she had loved the first moments, weeks, and months of an affair, but now it was different. She wanted these bypassed or saved for later, she wanted it as it was with her children, easy and silent and with an immeasurable understanding. In the past, it might have been his wife, his children, his this, his that which sent her hurrying to isolation. But it was no longer those things, it was no longer the commencement, the enjoyment, the agony, or the conclusion of the affair. It was something else. She wanted a love ordained from within. Two sets of inner eyes knowing and comprehending.

"I don't think I can go through with this," she said. He sensed it just before she said it. He had been telling her a story, his fork held in midair, and he dropped it and let out a volley of swear words. The soles of their shoes separated.

"Why not?" he said, and she could see that it had shaken him. He still smiled, but the light behind the smile had gone gray, was quashed. It was hard to say why, except that she muttered how she was unused to being with someone and giving nothing. Her role was to give, not to take. Or she could tell him that she was on tenterhooks, that she was afraid. She could not tell him that she feared to be ugly for a moment, or to show signs of tiredness, or failure, or fatigue. By telling him these things she would make him believe them. Nor could she say that possibly her flesh was too white, her jokes were artifacts, her breasts sagged. Time had made its numerous erosions on her. To herself she was like a doll who smiles and flutters and is then put away in its box of chaff, and is taken out again, but only briefly.

"I've been away too long," she said, but that was to herself.

"I don't want to go on with this," she said, and she saw puzzlement come over his face and sensed that he felt he had just encountered an anomaly, a woman whom he did not know and would not be able to fathom.

"I'll tell you what I'll do," he said. "I'll take a walk. I'd like a walk. I'll take a long walk and give you time to think."

"I'd rather go," she said, and as she rose he gave her hand a little squeeze and it seemed to say, "You're a fool to bypass this."

"See you," she said, but she could not see him through the prism of tears that blinded her to everything in the room, as she hurried to what was dark and impenetrable outside.

—EDNA O'BRIEN

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As they fought, the police wrested what they called "a device" from the man's left hand and threw a bomb blanket over it. Minutes later, Brandy, an explosive-sniffing dog, was taken to the room and immediately sat down, indicating the presence of explosives.—*The Times.*

The police said that Brandy, an explosive-sniffing dog, was brought in after the siege ended shortly before 8 P.M. and made four passes through the room. Finding no explosives the dog sat down because she had finished her task.—*The Times the next day.*

Some dogs would have sat down *before* they entered the room.

SNOW

THE first snow blends with blue and with laundered sheets. Blue is the color of winter shadows outside the back window of the apartment house. I am five and can barely see above the sill. White sheets frozen stiff, folded once, tinted blue by those shadows, are swaying slightly on the pulley line extended between our big brick building and a wood-frame two-family house out back. My mother, who has six children, has hung them out. I don't know what she does after hanging out the clothes. Except for that, she doesn't seem to do anything in the apartment all day. I see her standing in the living room, weeping or angry—talking, shouting. No one else is in the room. I know she washes a lot of clothes. My father is always away, working.

Next, I remember a long loaf of pure new snow on the windowsill. My brother Frank, two years older than I, opens the window and tries to make a snowball, but the snow is soft, too dry and powdery. I touch it, hold some, and it melts in my hand.

In a flash, I'm a year older. I'm outside in the alleyway between apartment houses. My friend Donny and I are united in a snowball fight against children who live down the block. It is late in the Depression, 1940. Now, from my secure warm house, I look through ice-circled windows and see myself then, my hands covered with socks. They wet through quickly and I take them off and hold my hands together. Donny and I are laughing—we're winning the snowball fight. Donny is wearing round, puffy, dark-brown leather mittens that have a white flannel lining and elasticized striped-cloth wristbands. They smell good.

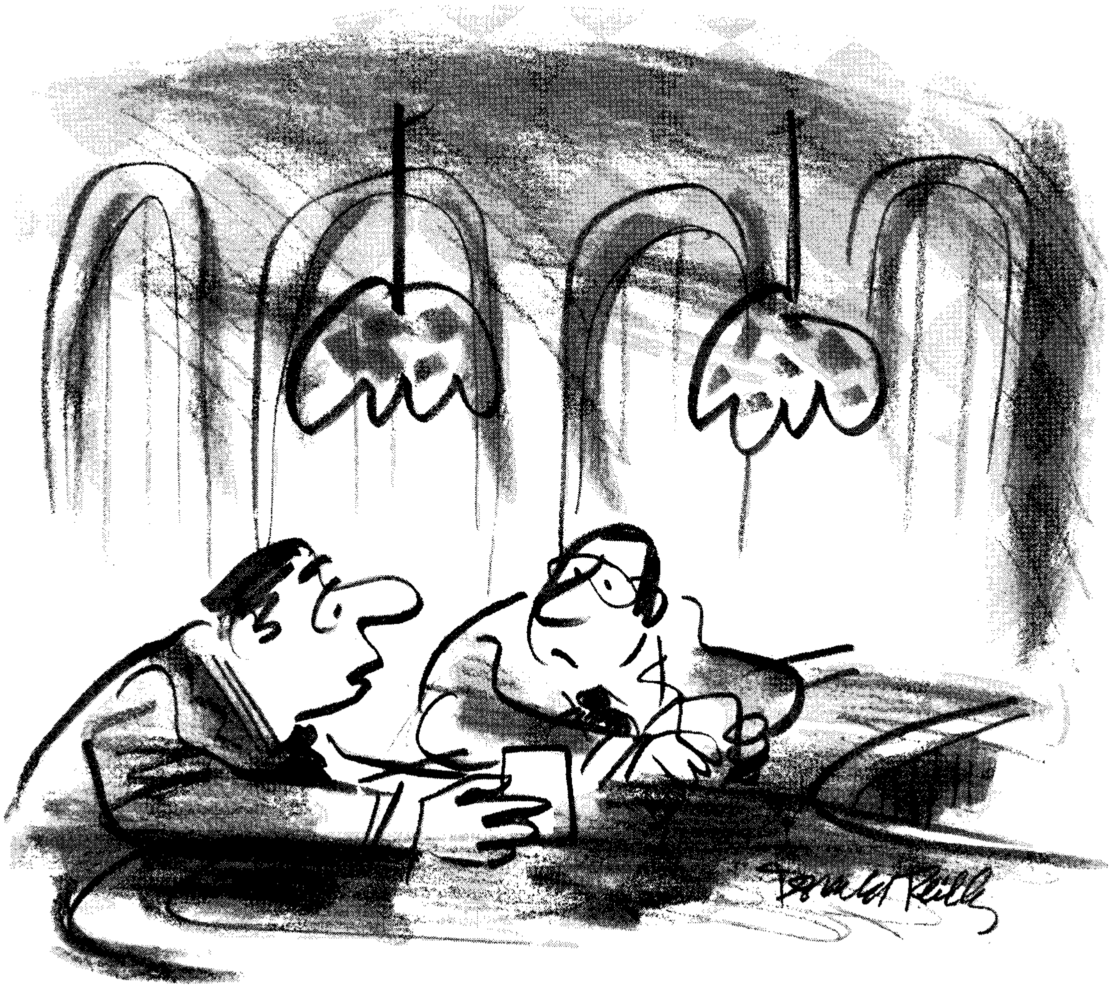
I NEVER see my mother in snow. I don't even remember her getting in and out of a car in the snow. She always hated cold weather and she still does. When I go to visit her on a winter day, I often find her in the kitchen, standing next to a silvery radiator. It hisses. I kiss her cheek and she is silent. She is short, heavy now, and her face still has some beauty, and her hair is still quite black. I ask her if she'd like to go out in the cold and she shakes her head and smiles. I don't know where my father is. He's not napping in his room, where I often find him these days. He's seventy-four, and my mother is sixty-four—I can't believe they're that old already. Maybe he is at the Elks club, playing cards. If they had remained in their little village high in the mountains instead of emigrating to America, he would probably be at the coffeehouse, playing cards, too. But my mother would be in a whitewashed stone house with a red tile roof, sitting on a low stool by a clean hearth with a small fire in it, and she'd be knitting unbleached raw-wool stockings and sweaters and gaiters, and gossiping with other women, mostly relatives.

WHEN I'm twelve, the State Welfare Department places me in a foster home to live with my four younger brothers and sisters. They have all been moved there years ago. Frank doesn't have to go—he's old enough to say no.

At the foster home, we are outside most of the time. The foster mother puts us out because there are many of us and she can't stand the noise and commotion. (Now that my son David is five and has friends trooping through the house, I can almost understand. But I would never force a child to go out in the winter.)

The foster mother won't let us leave the yard, and she won't let us play in the snow because we'll get wet and then sick, she says. And she damn well doesn't want us home from school, she says. So what good is the snow? We stand in a huddle back near the one-car garage and stamp our feet and talk and sing and joke together until it's time to go in. Sometimes we run races back and forth in the gravel driveway. Sometimes I stand in the corner, remembering life in the brick building, and it seems full of freedom—charming and warm. My brother Frank and I used to play cards and wrestle, and Donny and I went to the movies after raging and laughing in the snow. I think, as I stand in the corner, She will never ruin the snow for me.

A year passes. A friend at school in the eighth grade, Larry Stanger, a



"The only thing I believe in is my Volvo."

strong boy a year older than I, with a certain sparkle in his eye and with a darkening mustache, has given me a prophylactic. I keep it in its little worn cardboard packet in a coat pocket in my clothes closet. Occasionally, on a moonlit night, with my little brothers asleep in the bed next to mine, I think about it, and I think about Larry talking about girls. It's all beyond me, but I'm filled with a curious pride.

I'm hungry. Ravenous. I daydream at my desk in school about food, I dream in my sleep about food. The foster mother, who has always feared a new Depression, saves money. She gives us just enough food to sustain us. But I'm growing rapidly, rawboned, thin; I need more. I can't tell her—she might give me a simple easy swipe with her hand. That's the extent of her assaults on me. She gives my sisters and brothers real beatings. She is tall, pale, and obese, and eats great quantities of food piled high on her plate. Her husband is a little quiet man and he never lays a hand on any of us. Sometimes when she is beating someone, flailing away with a stick, he says, "Christ, woman," and leaves the house and gets into his car and drives away.

One day, it snows so much that school is called off. By now, I have begun stealing candy or packages of cupcakes at the nearby general store every time I am sent there by the foster mother to buy milk or bread or cold cuts. If I steal cupcakes, I eat them at the store. The woman who runs the place—pleasant, plump, in her thirties—is always adjusting her eyeglasses and smoking Pall Malls and talking a lot about cancer and crochet patterns with other women at the cash register, and she doesn't notice me eating. I pay for the few items and leave, my hunger appeased for a while.

If I steal candy, I choose something flat, like a big, nickel square of fudge wrapped in cellophane, slip it into my pocket, and take it home with me. As soon as I can, I go upstairs and hide it in my closet. Late at night, when I'm sure everyone is asleep, I sit in the closet and eat it, first opening the crackling package between heavy hanging coats to muffle the noise. The candy has a terrific heft and is unbelievably delicious.

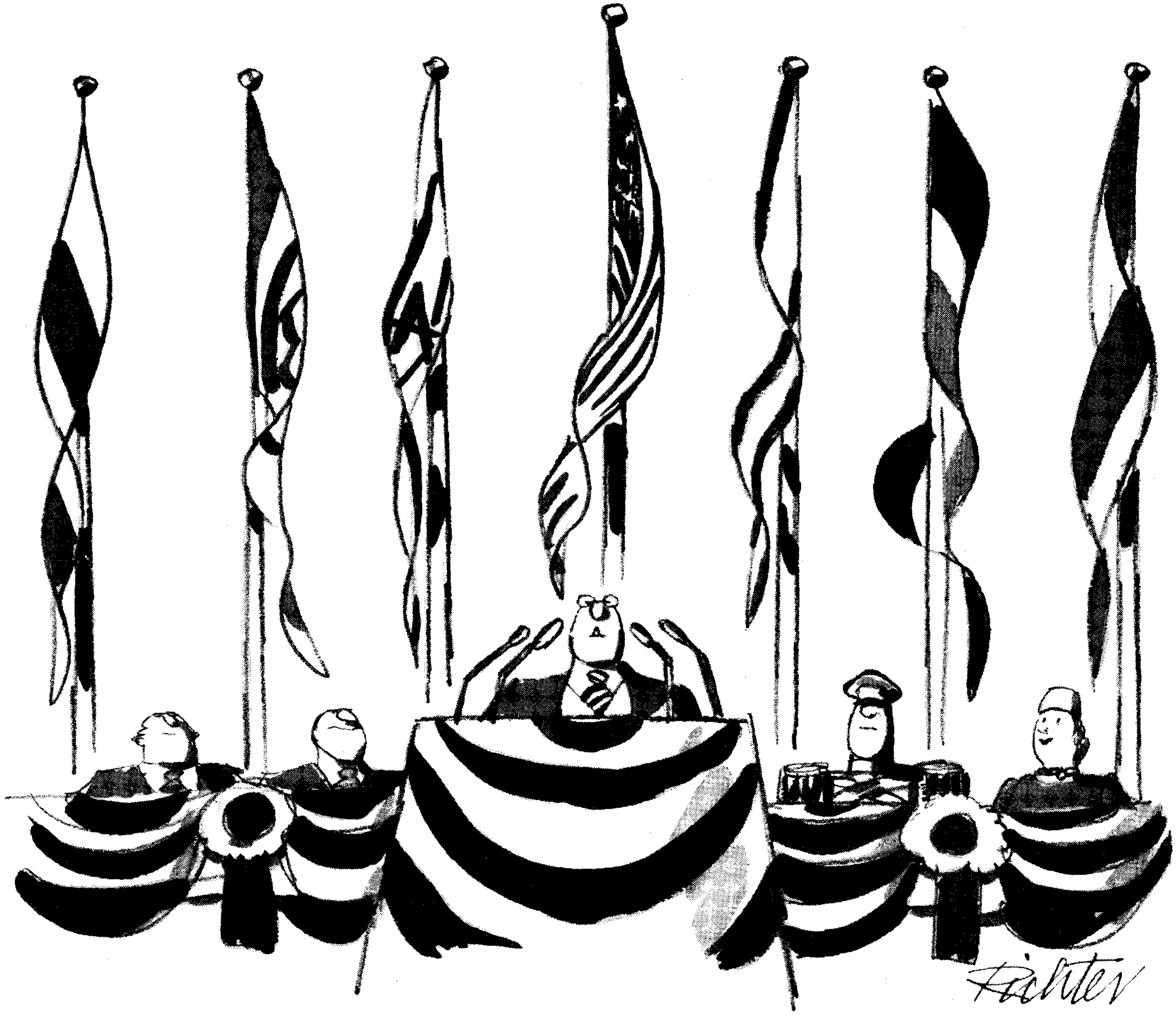
On this certain snowy day, in the afternoon, the foster mother calls me from the book I'm reading and tells me I have to go to the store for her. Inwardly, I'm nearly in ecstasy, because I can steal something to eat. It's a wonder she can't see me jumping out of my skin. She gives me money, and I put on my arctics and plaid mackinaw and plow through deep snow, down our road, around the corner to the state highway, up that highway a distance of one city block to the store. The snow has stopped. The sky is heavy and dark; a violent wind is pushing clouds fast, rocking bare trees.

ALWYN
EXTERMINATORS

At the store, I pick up what the foster mother wants, glance at the proprietress, and slide a flat, packaged Whoopee Pie into my coat pocket. I glance at the proprietress again, and she glances at me and adjusts her glasses. Oh, God, I think she has seen me. She will tell the foster mother, and I will be sent away. Instead of beating me, the foster mother is always threatening to send me away, alone, where I'll never see my family again.

When I go to the register to pay, the woman merely rings up the purchase and takes my money. I think my face is red. She asks me why I'm so quiet today, and I make some reply and shrug. She tells me I'm getting to be quite a young man, and I feel my face go redder.

Leaving the store, I'm reckless with hunger, and instead of waiting to eat the Whoopee Pie in my closet at night, I pull it out now, tear off the cellophane, and shove the round cream-filled chocolate layer cake into my mouth in three or four bites. I push it with my tongue, break it up, masticate wildly, shove it to the back of my mouth, and force it down my throat. It hurts on the way down my esophagus. But I have to eat



"Your Majesty, Mr. President, Your Eminence, Your Royal Highness, Mr. Ambassador, Madam Chairperson, Your Excellency, distinguished clergy, most gracious host, fellow-delegates, loyal supporters, comrades-in-arms, honorable fellows, most generous sponsors, honored patrons, distinguished guests, kind friends, fellow-countrymen, ladies and gentlemen— And now I see my time is up."

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it fast—home is just around the corner, half a block down our rural street. I'm gulping and swallowing, looking at crooked sumac branches clawing up through snow on the highway shoulder. I wipe my mouth very quickly, lick my teeth, swallow, lick my teeth again, spit out chocolate-flecked saliva, lick all my teeth again, swallow, suck clean cold air between my teeth, and breathe deeply and heavily to remove odor.

When I get to the house, the foster mother isn't in the kitchen. Her husband is sitting at the table, smoking, listening to the radio. My brothers and sisters are playing, chattering in a corner. The foster father is softly whistling a little tune. He looks at me. Then he looks at me again, peculiarly. He stops whistling. He says to me, "Mike, what've you been eating?"

Instantly I think of being sent away. "Nothing," I say. My heart dives.

"Nothing?"

"No."

"What's that in the corner of your mouth?"

I wipe at my mouth swiftly with my right forefinger and find it spotted with cream filling, white as the snow drifted high out in the driveway.

The foster mother is lumbering into the kitchen. She quickly learns what has happened. Then *she* asks me what I've been eating.

"A Whoopee Pie," I say forthrightly.

"Where did you get it?" she says.

Without even thinking, I say, "From Larry Stanger. He was at the store. He was having one, and he bought me one."

"Then why did you lie?" She flicks a finger toward her husband and says, "Why did you tell him you had nothing?"

"Because I thought of bringing it home, but then how could I share it? So I ate it."

"I don't believe you. If you're lying to me . . ."

She'd have me sent away, of course.

"You can call Larry Stanger up and ask him." I have no idea what I'm saying. I just have faith that if she does call him on the telephone, if she says, "Hello? Is this Larry Stanger? This is Mrs. Linden. Did you just buy Michael a Whoopee Pie at the store?" Larry will say, "Sure, I did. He wanted to bring it home and share it, but I told him there's not enough, he couldn't possibly, and we stood outside the store in the snow and ate our Whoopee Pies together."

"I'm going to find out if you're lying," the foster mother says. She gets up with great effort from the kitchen table, pulls at her shapeless housedress, and groans toward the dining room. My brothers and sisters have stopped playing. The foster father has turned off the radio, and the place is silent. My heart is beating fast.

The dining room is overfurnished with heavy, dark mahogany pieces. She takes the telephone book out of the china-closet drawer and sits down next to the buffet. She smooths her white hair. She turns pages for some time, licking her finger, squinting, then closes the telephone book. She lifts the receiver, hesitates, replaces it. She pauses for a long time. Then she says, "I'm not going to call this time. But it sure sounds fishy to me. If I ever catch you lying to me, young man, or stealing, you know how you'll end up."

"You can ask Larry Stanger." My voice is strong.

The next day in school, when I see Larry, I tell him about it. He has that glint in his eye. He smiles and says if it ever comes up he'll cover for me.

It never comes up. After this episode, I am slavishly careful when I steal food, stealthy as a private detective. The hunger doesn't subside. It grows. I have to eat. I want to be strong. I want to be a man.

I RETURN home to live, at the end of high school. I'm eighteen and am allowed to make that decision. I go away to college on scholarship. During my freshman year, my father buys a house and the rest of the family comes home.

One day during Christmas vacation, I shovel the whole driveway by myself. After that, I have a pain just under my left shoulder blade. It goes away but always comes back when I'm tired.

At college, my friends and I have snowball fights. Then, at night, drunk, we rush outside, lie down, move our arms and legs flat in the snow, and, hooting and laughing, make snow angels. In the morning sun, as I walk alone to class, the snow piled in soft clumps on dogwood branches outside the dormitories and class buildings looks like cotton. I associate this cotton-piled snow with loneliness.

SUSAN and I have been married ten years. In that time, we live in apartments. Susan likes to look at snow only from a warm, cozy room. My snow life consists of digging the car out of plowed heaps. Otherwise, I stand at windows, looking at the snow, longing for it. As if it is forbidden, off limits, I never go out in it. I want to take walks in it, eat some, throw snowballs, make snowmen, go sliding, lie in it and make snow angels, but I never do any of these things. I miss the snow, the earth. Although no one is stopping me from going to it, I feel like a prisoner.

We have a son, and when he is four we buy a house. In the fall, I am on the earth at last, planting bulbs, raking leaves, cleaning up.

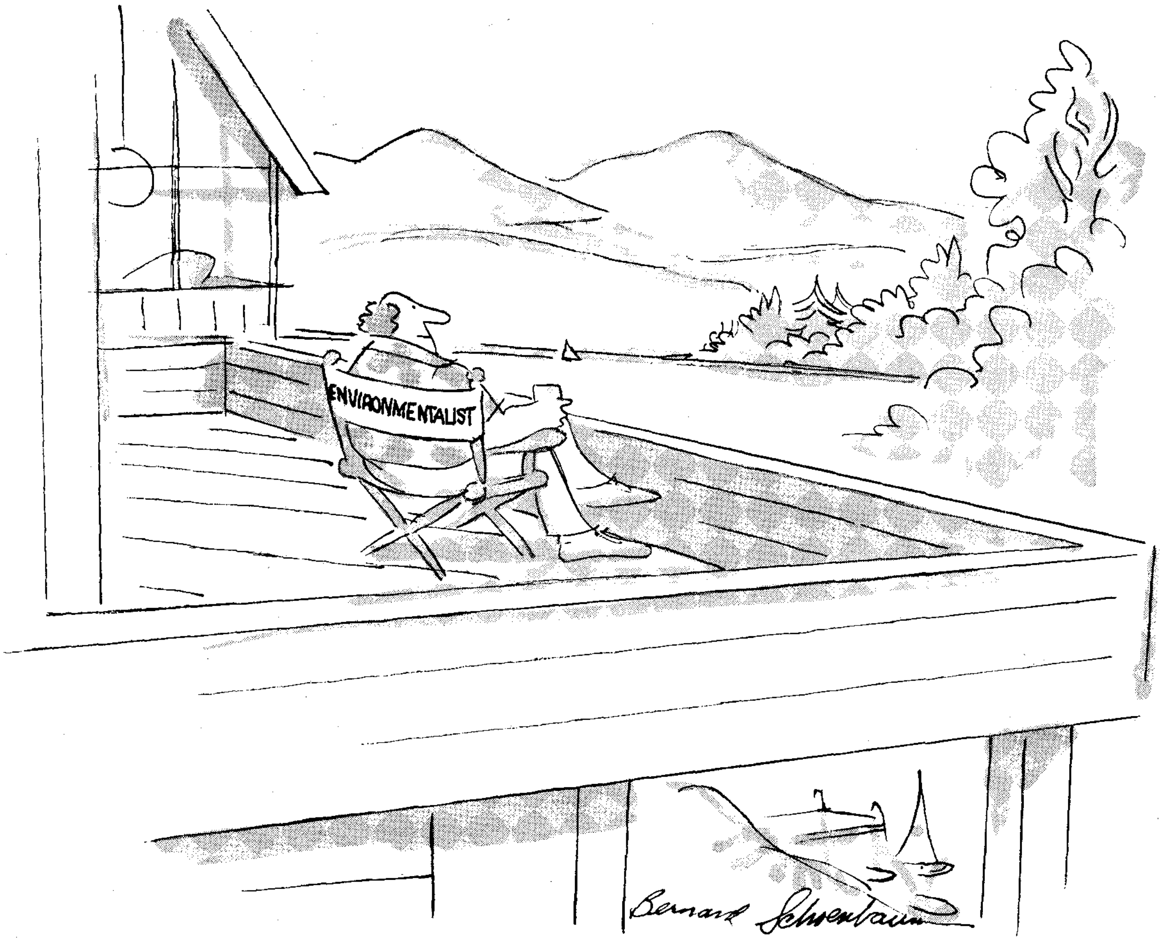
Winter comes. For a long time, there is little or no snow. Then, finally, one Thursday night in February it snows all night and all day Friday. We're stranded in deep snow, hidden. Luckily, there is enough food. Susan and I shovel our long curved driveway. She doesn't complain. I try not to, although I feel the old pain under my left shoulder blade and take note of mortality. I remember my father's driveway and wonder if my parents are snowbound. I think of my mother standing beside the hot radiator, staring out the window.

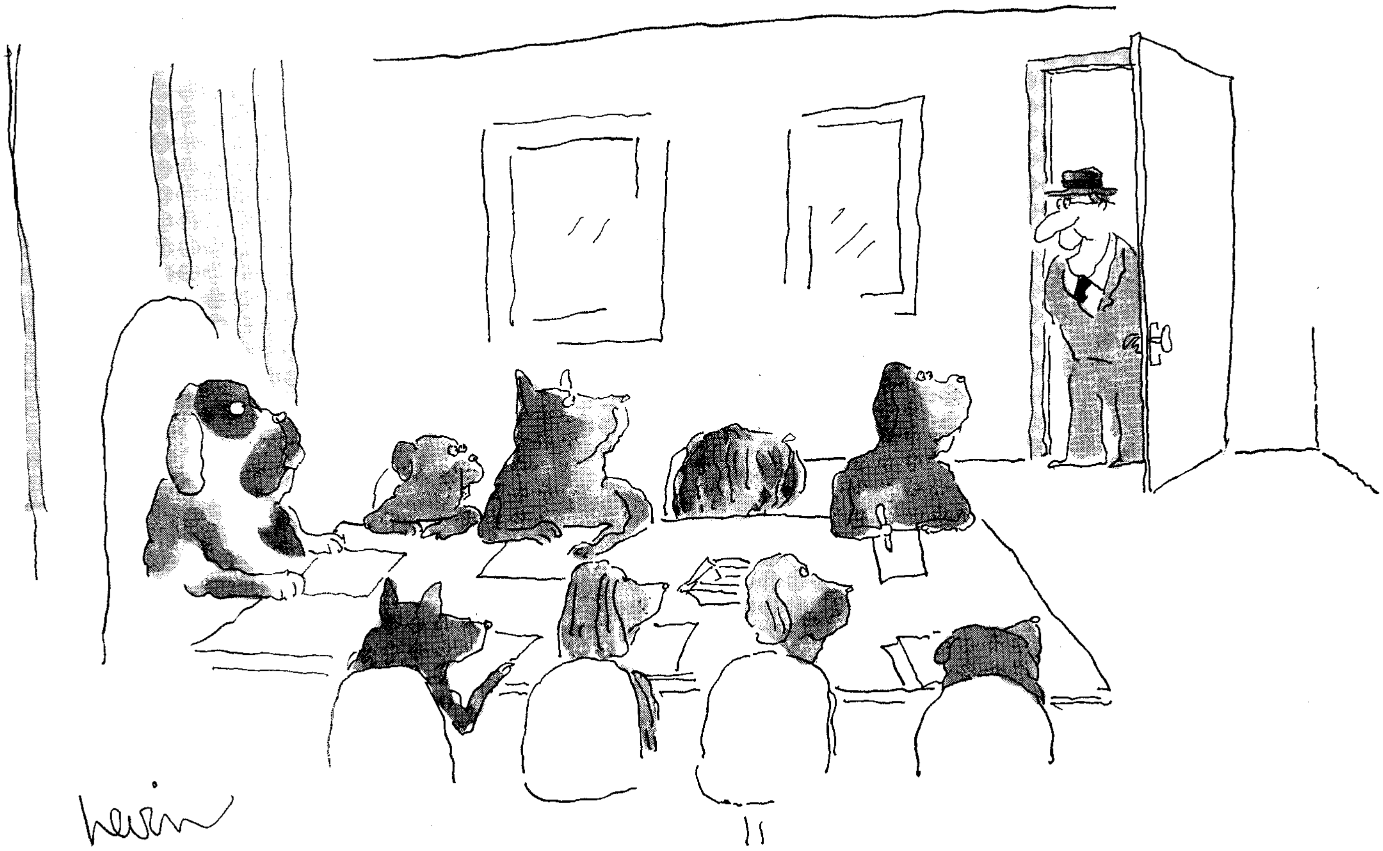
On Sunday, I decide to take David sliding. When I tell him, his dark eyes flash, he jumps up and down and shouts. His mother doesn't want to come. She dresses David warmly and gives me chocolate bars to take with us for energy. I put David's sled in the back of the station wagon, and we drive to the local country club. It has an enormous, spread-out, open hill. I feel a little shaky about going—after all, I'm over forty, and there will be a lot of kids there, teen-agers, and I haven't my wife to talk with, to share the experience with.

When we park, there is an ambulance stopped down the road, flashing its red light. I think of how extraordinary, how startling, red blood must be in new white snow. The ambulance pulls away rapidly, soundlessly, flashing. I don't want to know what's happened, but as we leave our car I ask a tall girl about it.

"Someone was hurt," she says.

"Sliding?"





"Oops, sorry! Wrong room!"

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"Yes. She hurt her back."

"Badly?"

"I think so."

We enter the country-club grounds through a break in a stone wall. David is hanging back. He says, "Daddy. Please look at me. Is someone killed? We're not killed, are we. Daddy, I don't want to go. I don't want to go sliding."

"Nothing will happen to you. You'll like it, you'll see."

Until now, David has only been sliding down our slightly inclined front lawn with his reluctant mother.

"No, Daddy. I don't want to. You go, and I'll stand down here and wait for you."

I'm holding his hand and I pull him along as gently as I can. The place is crowded with people, big and little, mostly young. There is a lot of color, motion.

The snow is crusty on top, soft underneath. We tramp through it. I look forward to sliding. David is crying. "I want to go home," he says.

Almost halfway up the hill, I stop, turn around, point the sled downhill, set David before me on the sled, and sit down. He struggles. I kiss him and speak softly into his ear, "It will be O.K." We start to move. The snow here isn't packed down yet, and so we go slowly. We pick up a little speed, and I begin laughing. I'm laughing out loud near the bottom of the hill. David looks back at me, peers up around his red-and-blue stocking hat, starts laughing. We are laughing together when the sled stops.

"Oh, Daddy," he says. "Let's do it again."

"You don't want to go home?"

"I want to slide."

We walk to the top of the hill. It's windless but very cold, the sky is bright blue, the sun stands burning before us. A lot of people are going down, two and three and four at a time. There are regular sleds, toboggans, discs, plastic strips. David is jittery, but I talk to him and hug him and convince him that it's all right.

The snow is packed hard here, and we glide swiftly, hit a few moguls, bounce, shoot down the hill. We are laughing out loud.

"Again, Daddy, again!"

We make many runs. At the top, we serenely survey the snowy world. I take out chocolate bars and we stand together in the snow and share them. We get on the sled and start slow, then rush down. Our faces are close together. He's laughing, his red lips pulled back, his white teeth gleaming.

We reach the bottom. I stand and tell David it's time to go.

"Once more, Daddy, please?"

We make one more run. The moon is coming up behind us, huge, silvery in the east above the hill. Before us, the fiery sun is just beginning to set. We walk to the car in blue shadows.

My feet are wet and cold, but I don't mind. David's cheeks are scarlet.

He says, "Let's do this again, all right? Let's come here and slide again."

"We will. Do you want some more chocolate?"

"No."

"Are you sure?"

"I'm not hungry."

I'm not, either.

—Harry Mountzoures

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THE PROMISSORY NOTE

Promissory note
Of the stirred life,
Tonight I opened
The rare book of you

And found
The last page missing.
It is six o'clock,
And you still owe me

Everything.

—Howard Moss

A REPORTER AT LARGE

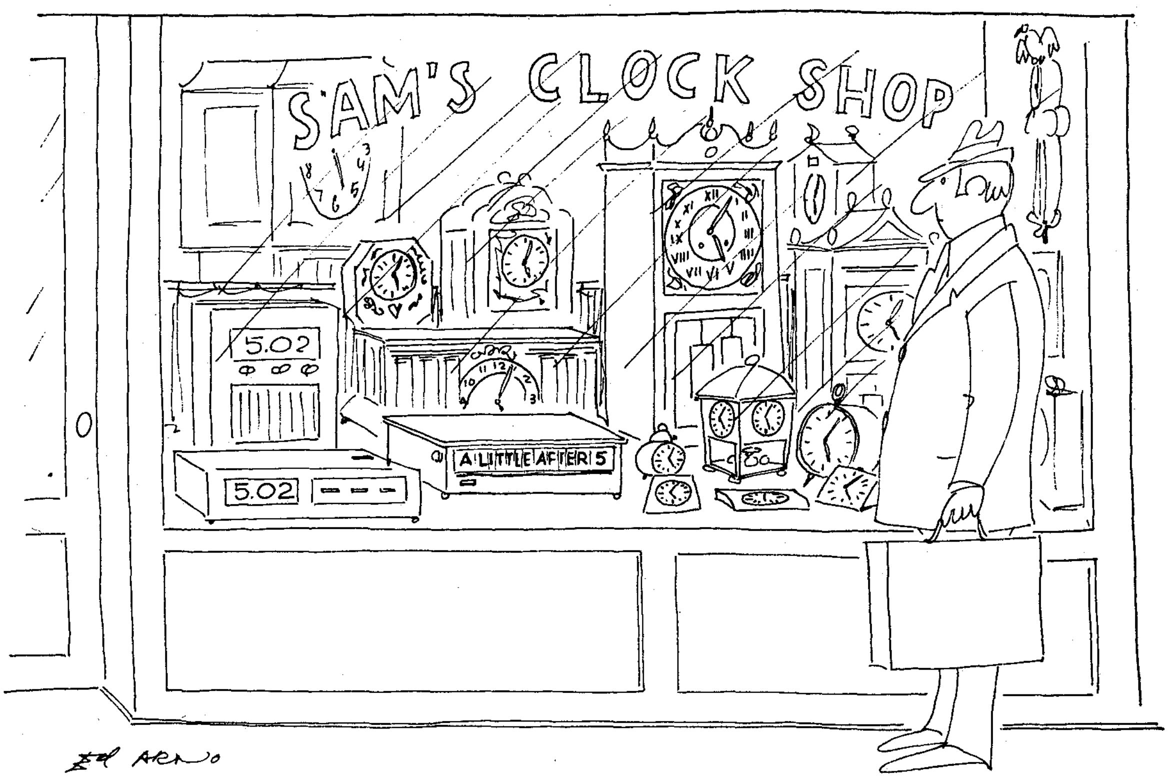
CONTAMINATED

SOME time ago, I paid a visit to the town of Seveso, about thirteen miles north of Milan, in Lombardy, Italy, to inquire into the condition of the people there almost two years after a toxic cloud that was created by an industrial accident descended on the community. The accident occurred at 12:37 P.M. on Saturday, July 10, 1976, when an explosion took place in an unattended chemical reactor at the plant of an Italian company known as ICMESA (Industrie Chimiche Meda Società Anonima), in the town of Meda, which lies directly north of Seveso. In this reactor ICMESA was producing a chemical called 2,4,5-trichlorophenol, which was intended for use in the manufacture of the well-known antibacterial compound hexachlorophene. The explosion ruptured a safety valve at the top of the reactor and released into the open air a vaporous plume of toxic material. Condensing in the atmosphere above and carried southward by a moderate breeze, the plume formed a whitish cloud, much of which dipped down upon and rolled unevenly across an extensive inhabited area. Some thicker parts of the cloud descended on houses and gardens and on the people in them.

Because the accident occurred during the lunch hour, most residents of the area were probably inside their homes at the time. Since it was a Saturday and not a regular workday for most people in the area, quite a few families were enjoying their noon meal in the open, perhaps under the shade of fruit trees in their gardens, when the cloud drifted toward Seveso and then came down around them. A number of small children were playing outdoors, and some of them ran around in the billowing cloud, laughing and waving their arms. They did not do so very long, though, for the mist had an acrid smell and made them cough. Some of the people who had been having lunch outdoors went into their houses until the mist cleared, after twenty minutes or so; then they went back out and finished lunch. After a while, most of the children and many of the adults began to feel nauseated, and still later they grew dizzy and developed headaches, diarrhea, and marked irritation of the skin. In the people worst affected, this irritation quickly developed into burnlike sores on faces, arms, and legs. That afternoon, birds in the area were seen to flutter down in obvious distress from trees where they had been perching. Chickens, cats, and other domestic animals in the area began to sicken, and by the middle of the following week some of them died. For the human inhabitants of Seveso and adjacent areas, the experiences of the next several months were to assume the quality of a Biblical plague, a sort of chemical murrain from above.

On the day of the explosion, however, most of the Seveso inhabitants who had been exposed seem not to have reacted with particular alarm in the hours after the cloud dispersed. They were accustomed to smoke and malodorous fumes from the ICMESA plant. They were aware, even, of certain ominous events that for quite a while people in the area had directly associated with vapors coming from the factory—the death from time to time of numbers of rabbits and chickens raised by families living in its vicinity. But people there were apparently inured to such happenings. Many of the people in and around Seveso were from Sicily and other parts of southern Italy and had migrated to the area north of Milan to find work, and they seemed resigned to the pollution constantly pouring on them from factories as just part of the penalty to be paid for earning a livelihood in the industrialized North.

No member of the reactor crew was at work in the reactor building when the explosion occurred, and it was not until early Saturday afternoon that a chemist employed by ICMESA arrived to inspect the damaged reactor. After he did so, he walked over to a cluster of houses about a thousand feet south of the ICMESA plant, on which the densest part of the cloud had settled, and he advised people there not to eat fruit from their trees for the time being. Some of the people took his suggestion seriously enough to follow it, and others either did not hear it or did not give it much importance and continued to eat the fruit. But most of the several thousand people living in the area were given no such advice that day. Then, late in the afternoon of the following day, Francesco Rocca, the mayor of Seveso, was visited at his home by two representatives of ICMESA—the plant manager and an assistant—who told him that because the cloud had "possibly" contained "some material of a herbicidal nature" people living near the factory should be



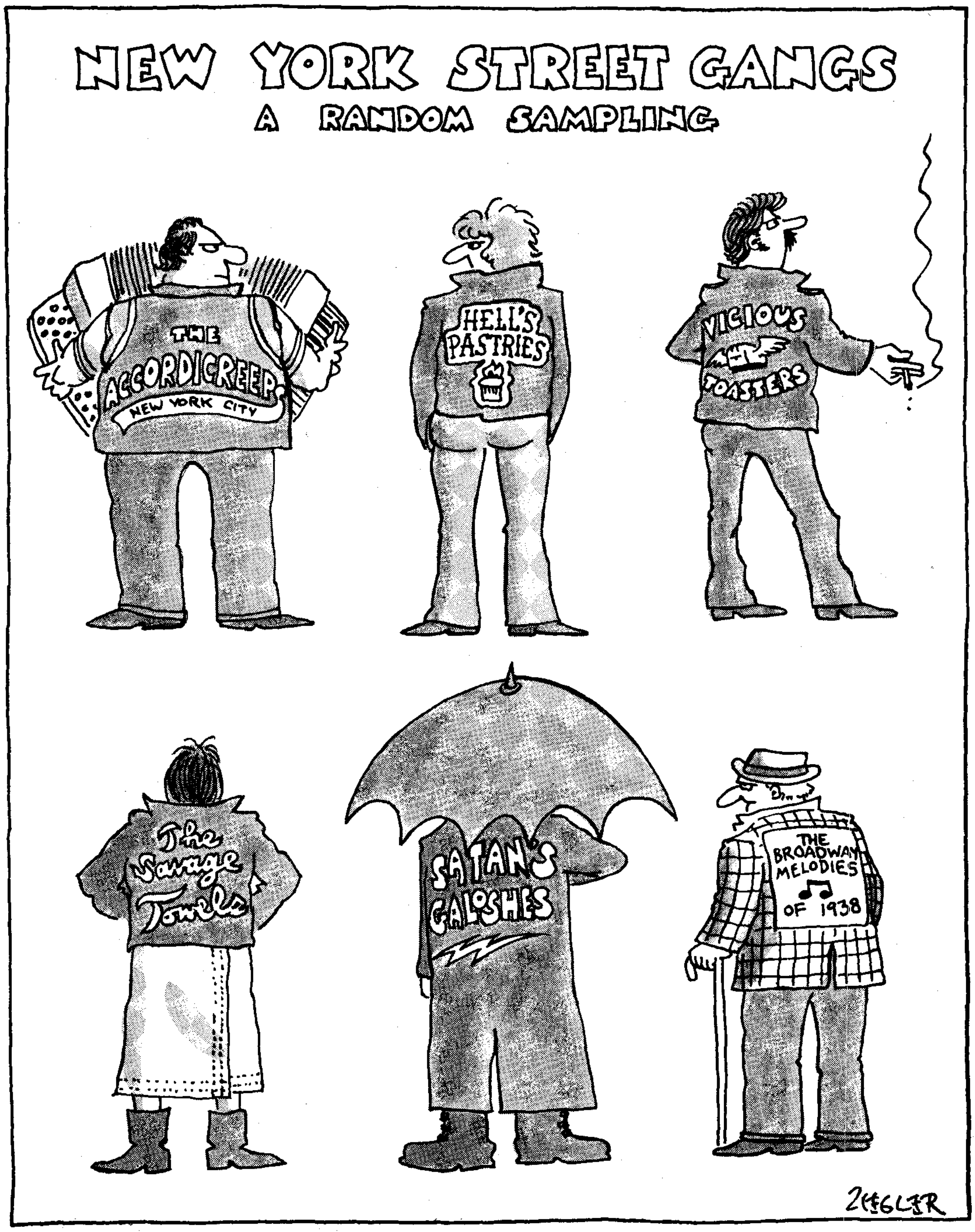
"All right, Bostock! Shape up or ship out!"

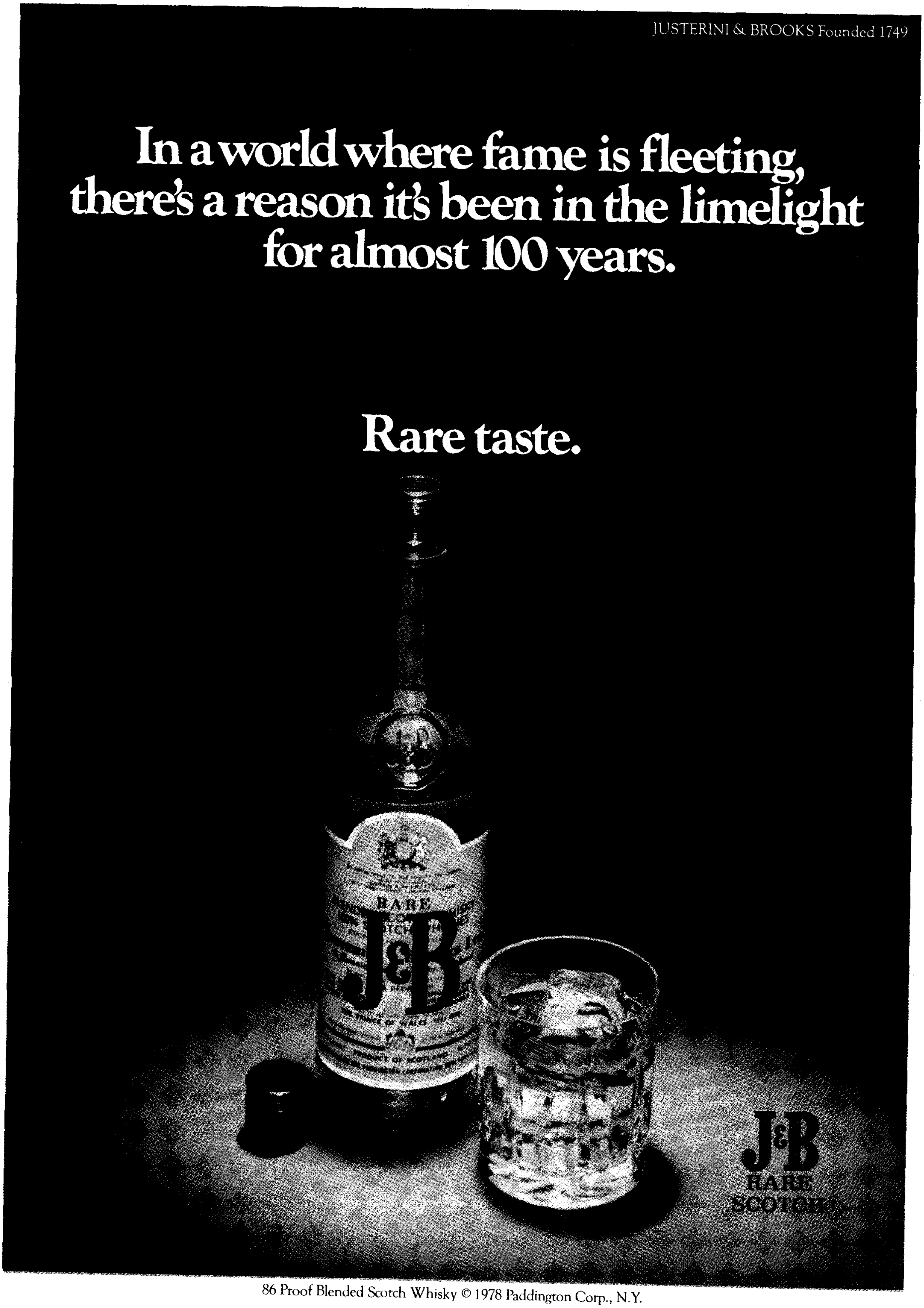
officially advised not to eat fruit from their trees. On Thursday, Mayor Rocca drew up a public notice advising people in the area not to eat either fruit or vegetables from their gardens. The ICMESA staff members, in their talk with Rocca on Sunday, had not explained just what the possible "material of a herbicidal nature" might consist of. Nor were they any more informative during the next eight days. By that time, a score of children from the Seveso area had been hospitalized with burnlike skin lesions, and four of these children were in serious condition; other children were sickly; rabbits, chickens, and other animals in the area had died by the hundred; hardly a bird in the area seemed to be left alive; and many of the adult humans were feeling that their health had been affected adversely.

Unfortunately for the local inhabitants, the owners of ICMESA, who knew only too well what was in the toxic cloud, kept quiet about it for nearly two weeks. ICMESA is owned by a Swiss company, the Givaudan Corporation, which is the world's principal supplier of hexachlorophene. The Givaudan Corporation is owned, in turn, by the huge multinational drug company Hoffmann-La Roche, which also has its headquarters in Switzerland. According to the health authorities of the Lombardy region—who themselves appear to have been remarkably slow in taking action—it was not until July 24th, fourteen days after the explosion, that the Givaudan Corporation formally admitted the precise nature of the danger facing those who had been exposed. The fact was that the cloud had unleashed upon the area one of the most toxic substances known to man—2,3,7,8 tetrachlorodibenzo-*p*-dioxin, also known as TCDD or, by chemists aware of its extraordinary toxicity among existing chlorinated dibenzodioxins, simply as dioxin. It was this dioxin that had for years been notorious among scientists because of its presence as an inevitable contaminant in the herbicide 2,4,5-T. As a component of the American military defoliant known as Agent Orange, 2,4,5-T had been rained down by the tens of thousands of tons, and over some five million acres, in herbicidal warfare operations in South Vietnam in the nineteen-sixties. In less toxic form than that used in Vietnam, 2,4,5-T has continued to be employed in commercial and government-sponsored herbicidal operations in the United States, and on such a scale that more millions of acres are actually under treatment here with 2,4,5-T each year than the total acreage that was defoliated during the years of the Vietnam war. The Givaudan announcement came, of course, as a severe shock to the residents of the Seveso area. But even worse news soon followed. On July 25th, the Lombardy regional authorities announced that the residents of the most heavily contaminated part of Seveso would, for their own safety, have to leave their homes. The general area initially judged to be contaminated was reckoned at a little less than a thousand acres and was divided into two zones of risk. The first, Zone A, consisted of some two hundred and sixty-seven acres immediately to the south of the ICMESA plant and was inhabited by seven hundred and thirty-nine people. This zone, through parts of which, toward its eastern edge, the Milan-Como superstrada ran, was to be entirely evacuated and sealed off, although through traffic along the superstrada itself was to be allowed to continue. The second area, Zone B, consisting of six hundred and sixty-five acres and inhabited by approximately five thousand people, was to be sealed off, too, but only from nonresidents; the residents of Zone B could continue living in their homes. However, their children under fifteen years of age—and there were about eighteen hundred of them—were to be taken to schools or day-care centers outside the zone during the day to reduce their exposure to dioxin. Around these two zones, a larger zone, called the Zone of Respect, which consisted of several thousand acres and had about twenty thousand inhabitants, was declared relatively free of dioxin, but it was also designated as an area in which continuous monitoring for dioxin levels and for signs of dioxin contamination, and a watch over the health of the inhabitants, would be maintained as long as necessary.

The evacuation of Zone A began on July 26th, when a hundred and seventy-nine Seveso residents, some in cars and buses, some pushing handcarts loaded with belongings, passed through openings in barbed-wire barriers that had been strung across roads to the zone by Italian Army troops, who had been called to the scene of the disaster and were charged with guarding the area against unauthorized access. Between July 26th and August 2nd, about a hundred residents left the zone. On August 2nd, a second large contingent, of four hundred and forty-four remaining residents, also left. The situation of the evacuees, most of whom were temporarily put up in a large hotel-and-apartment complex in the nearby community of Bruzzano, was pathetic. They left behind houses that in many instances they had built with their own hands and with the help of their families and neighbors. Around these deserted dwellings, most of which were grouped in clusters, the clusters being interspersed with gardens, small fields, and modest orchards, teams of masked figures in impermeable white suits and boots walked, gathering up the carcasses of birds, wild and tame rabbits, chickens, and family cats. And, as the Seveso evacuees were aware, hundreds of animals in Zone A that were obviously sick or dying were being shot or otherwise put out of their misery. The carcasses were being gathered in red plastic bags, which were then taken to designated sections of Zone A until a decision on how to dispose of them with the least danger could be arrived at. (A preliminary analysis of tissue from animals found dead indicated that they died of dioxin poisoning.)

In these circumstances, neither local medical people nor the regional health authorities who were charged with making the over-all decisions concerning the emergency seemed to be in a position to offer the evacuees or the people remaining in Zone B much reassurance about their well-being. It appears that at the time of the accident at ICMESA neither the Italian government nor Italian scientific circles had any significant amount of information concerning dioxin. Yet it is clear that ICMESA's own chemists and the executives and research people at the Givaudan Corporation were well aware not only of dioxin's extreme toxicity but also of controversy over its continuing presence as an undesired but unavoidable contaminant in the herbicide 2,4,5-T. The Givaudan people must have been well aware of the effects of dioxin on the health of workers who had been exposed to it in a number of previous explosions at plants in various countries, including the United States, where 2,4,5-trichlorophenol was being made as part of the process used during the production of 2,4,5-T or of hexachlorophene or various other polychlorinated phenolic compounds. The syndrome most common among affected workers was a disease known as chloracne, outwardly manifested by skin eruptions that showed up days or months after exposure,

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"He'll be back right after the street lights are turned on."

• •

and also, in severe cases, by such serious effects as liver damage, blurred vision, depression, and markedly decreased sexual drive.

After it became known to the Italian medical people and health authorities that dioxin had been released in the ICMESA accident, they hurriedly sought out available literature on industrial dioxin accidents, and it was all too evident from this literature that no antidote to dioxin existed. Since nearly all the workers affected in such industrial accidents were male, virtually nothing was on record about the effects of dioxin on women. Something that was on record, however, and had been causing serious concern among biologists for years, was the effect of dioxin, either in its chemically pure state or as a contaminant of the herbicide 2,4,5-T, on the fetuses of experimental animals. The effect on such animals had been shown in one study after another to be not only extremely toxic but also teratogenic, or fetus-deforming. Although no such specific cause-and-effect relationship had been established in human beings exposed to dioxin, the implications of these studies for the fetuses of exposed women were serious—so serious that they had played a major part in the American military's having been forced, in the spring of 1970, to end the greater part of its herbicidal warfare operations (Agent Orange, a fifty-fifty mixture of 2,4,5-T and another defoliant, 2,4-D, was the major weapon) in Vietnam.

When the reports of the true nature of the toxic cloud began to appear in the press and on television in Italy and elsewhere in Europe, there was a public uproar of recrimination against ICMESA and its multinational corporate owners, who were alleged to have been guilty of criminal negligence and irresponsibility in the running of their Italian subsidiary. And when it was reported by the media and confirmed by the Lombardy regional authorities that women in Seveso and other parts of the most affected area who were pregnant at the time of the accident could run the risk of having babies that would be born with deformities as a result of exposure to dioxin, the public storm swirled more intensely than ever around the unfortunate people involved. Certainly of all the trials that were to afflict the inhabitants of Seveso and neighboring communities none was more harrowing to the several hundred women who were pregnant at the time of the ICMESA explosion than the prospect that the children they were carrying might have birth defects. However reluctantly—for virtually all of them were pious Catholics—they were obliged to consider whether it was proper for them to take the risk of permitting their children to enter the world maimed or whether they should resort to abortion. Normally, abortion was considered a serious crime in Italy, but only a few months earlier the Italian supreme court had handed down a ruling that made it possible for pregnant women who were faced with unusual danger to mother or child to apply for permission to obtain therapeutic abortions, with permission granted only after rigorous inquiry and under extremely strict conditions. But the very notion that Seveso women would submit to abortion under any circumstances aroused the instant opposition of the Vatican, and the resulting controversy, which inevitably became a highly politicized issue, fought out between the Italian left, which upheld the right to abortion on demand, and the conservative Christian Democrats, who opposed it, served to make the distress of the pregnant women in the affected area all the greater. Eventually, thirty-four women from the area, most of them from Seveso, did receive officially sanctioned therapeutic abortions, at clinics in Milan and the township of Desio. And as many as a hundred and twenty women of the area who were unable, or felt themselves unlikely, to obtain therapeutic abortions have been estimated to have resorted to illegal abortions in Italy, or to abortions legally permitted in other European countries.

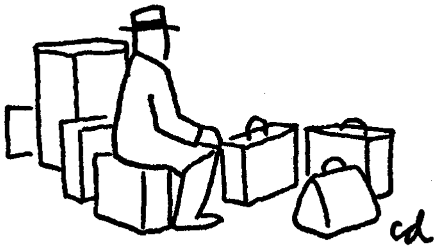
In October of 1976, I went to Milan to attend a symposium of toxicologists and other people from various Western countries who had a special interest in the problems of dioxin, and there I learned from some of the Italian medical people studying the after-effects of the Seveso disaster that the number of children and adults, mostly from Zone A, who had developed skin lesions of various kinds had risen to the hundreds. Of these, forty-four—mostly children and teen-agers—had been certified as having developed chloracne. As for the effects of the dioxin contamination on women who were in the first three months of pregnancy at the time of the explosion, the consensus among the medical people was that it was too early to tell if any damage had been done to their fetuses; it was known that two of the pregnant women had suffered spontaneous abortions, but it was felt that this number was not significantly greater than what was statistically normal for the area.

In order to study the full range of possible effects on the population and to undertake measures that might help restore the contaminated area to its normal condition, the Lombardy authorities had established, some time after the evacuation of Zone A, several scientific committees. These committees were made up of specialists from various medical institutes in the Milan area, including the University of Milan School of Medicine and the Mario Negri Institute for Pharmacological Research, a center for international conferences on toxicological matters. The Lombardy authorities announced that through these committees they were planning to carry out an ambitious program over several years which would include thousands of medical examinations and blood tests and a meticulous record of the condition of each exposed person, derived from the work of internists, toxicologists, gynecologists, pediatricians, and others.

While the authorities were attempting to get this program under way, other committees were at work trying to determine how to deal with and, if possible, restore to a safe condition the soil, vegetation, and buildings that had been most heavily contaminated by dioxin. By the fall of 1976, the teams of masked and specially clothed decontamination workers were busy cutting down trees in Zone A and gathering vegetation into plastic bags for storage in the most heavily contaminated part of the zone until plans for their disposal could be agreed upon. The techniques under active consideration for the decontamination of the soil and the buildings included treatment by various chemical and biological agents, combined with the action of natural and artificial light on soil and buildings. But the technique that was put forward as the safest and surest was one that the United States Air Force had proposed for disposing of its military stockpiles of more than two million gallons of Agent Orange left over from the Vietnam war; that is, by high-temperature burning in a specially designed incinerator. Because several Italian scientists had expressed interest in the technique, the Lombardy government was reported to be seriously contemplating the construction of a huge high-temperature incinerator on or near the site of the ICMESA factory. This was a formidable project, for it would involve the bulldozing or burning of as much as three hundred thousand tons of contaminated topsoil and building materials within Zone A and their removal to the proposed incinerator at the ICMESA site, where they would be burned at a temperature of eight hundred degrees Celsius (almost fifteen hundred degrees Fahrenheit). Under the right conditions, such incineration would presumably destroy the dioxin. So enormous was the amount of contaminated material to be incinerated that the time required for the entire process was estimated at not less than two years. The proponents of the scheme considered it the surest means of cleansing the area of dioxin.

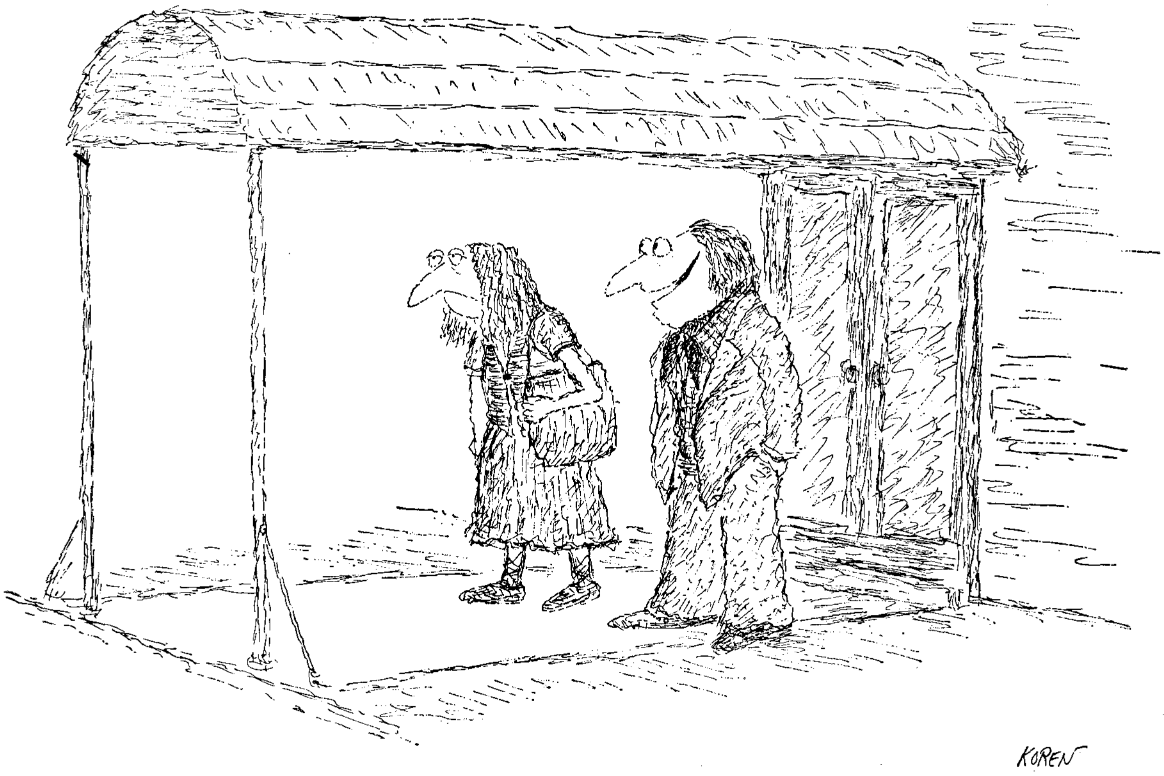
THIS, then, was roughly the situation at the time of my visit to the Milan area in October of 1976. In the months that followed, media interest in the aftereffects of the Seveso disaster declined. Most of the news items I came across on the subject during this period were from the English press, which seems to have made more of an attempt to keep abreast of developments in Seveso than American newspapers did. One item concerned the discovery of some unexpectedly elevated levels of dioxin and some suspected cases of chloracne that had been detected outside the boundaries of Zones A and B; another reported that local citizens had demonstrated to oppose the construction of an incinerator; other items noted that the regional authorities were so satisfied with progress in decontaminating considerable parts of Zone A that they were preparing to return many of the people to their homes within those parts of the zone so that the people could resume something like a normal life.

When I returned to Italy to learn more about the situation in Seveso, I was relieved to learn from a toxicologist in Milan whom I had interviewed in 1976 that, with the principal exception of those still afflicted with chloracne, most of the people who had been evacuated from Zone A had survived their exposure to dioxin better than had been expected. I was particularly relieved to hear that although in 1977 several babies in the area had been born with malformations, early fears that birth deformities would occur on a wide scale among the children born to women in the area had so far not been realized, and that the incidence of malformations that had occurred did not seem to be beyond the range of what might normally be expected in the population.



The next day, I went to Seveso and called on Mayor Rocca at his home. He lives in a part of town that is on a hillside that rises above an otherwise flat terrain. Here winding roads are lined with substantial villas within walled enclosures. Obviously, these are the homes of many of the Seveso élite—lawyers, company executives, timber merchants. I noticed that the outer walls of several of the properties had been spray-painted with swastikas—evidently the work of leftist protesters. The Mayor's house bore no such signs. It is a relatively new two-story red brick house of considerable size. Mayor Rocca, a man with short curly hair and a sharp, almost upturning Punchinello chin, received me graciously in his living room. I reminded the Mayor that I had met him on my previous visit to Milan and Seveso, and that he then expressed considerable anxiety about the uncertainties facing the people of Seveso after the ICMESA explosion, and I told him I wanted to learn about the present welfare of the community and what the mood of the people was almost two years later.

Mayor Rocca told me that he was pleased to be able to say that of the seven hundred and thirty-nine people who had eventually had to be evacuated from Zone A—which had been somewhat altered by the Lombardy regional authorities some time after the explosion—more than a hundred and fifty were moving back into their houses in the lower part of the zone, which was now considered free enough of dioxin to be safe for habitation. Zone A, he explained, had been divided into seven subzones, numbered according to their distance from the ICMESA plant, and the part being reoccupied consisted of Subzones A-6 and A-7. All this aroused thankful feelings among the affected people, not only in Subzones A-6 and A-7 but in the entire surrounding area as well, the Mayor said. "I am glad to inform you that at the end of this week there will be a major event," he continued solemnly. "You should know that Giovanni Cardinal Colombo, the Archbishop of Milan, promised a year ago, at a special service he preached in the unevacuated part of Seveso, that he



“What are you in the mood for?”

would come back to Seveso when the people returned to their homes. And now, this Saturday, sure enough, he will come to Subzones A-6 and A-7 to bless the houses that the people are reoccupying. The Archbishop’s blessing gives, so to speak, the official seal of approval to the return of the people to their homes. It sets the tone. There is a strong feeling among the people that, while nobody is likely to forget what has happened here, for them the worst is over. They believe that their trials are behind them.” The Mayor added, “The authorities feel that the measures they took right away—the evacuation and so on—were prudent and prevented major health disasters. The fact is that none of the strange diseases that were predicted everywhere for the Seveso people have been detected.”

On the abortion issue that arose after the accident, the Mayor left no doubt about where he stood. “In a surrounding area of a hundred thousand people, including the people of Seveso, thirteen hundred children have been born without any of the malformations forecast,” he told me. “There were certain political forces—radicals, left-wing parties—that took advantage of the accident and latched on to the abortion issue. They poisoned the atmosphere. But in fact the population did not take advantage of the opportunity to obtain abortions. These thirteen hundred normal children were born despite all the dire warnings. In August or September of 1976, a group came to Seveso demonstrating for abortion, trying to get the women up in arms. They failed totally. Most of the demonstrators were radicals. Some of the mothers in Seveso came to consult with me on the question. I am very happy that they had the courage to bring their children into the world. The local women chose life.”

The Mayor said that through the influence of Carlo Cardinal Confalonieri, who is the Dean of the College of Cardinals, and who himself comes from Seveso, he had been admitted to an audience with Pope Paul in September of 1977 and had discussed the Seveso incident with His Holiness. “The Pope commented that he thought the Almighty had a hand here,” Mayor Rocca said.

I asked the Mayor how he would sum up the impact of the toxic cloud and its consequences for the people.

He replied, “Seveso has been held up as an ecological disaster. The people don’t feel that that is the reality. After all, in these past seventeen months they have lived through all this tension and managed to carry on their lives in spite of the uncertainties and risks. I think these things should be held up to mankind as an example of how a community hit by heavy misfortune could come through it.”

In the days after this encounter, it seemed to me that the views expressed by Mayor Rocca—that the worst was over and the time was auspicious for a return to normal life in a dioxin-free environment—represented the official attitude toward the present condition and outlook of the people of Seveso. And it also appeared—on the surface, at least—to express the views of most of the evacuees I talked to who had already returned or were in the course of returning to their houses in the reopened sections of Zone A. The more I saw and heard, however, the more I became aware that the situation facing the people of Seveso and the surrounding area was far more complex than many of them cared to admit, certainly to outsiders, and perhaps even to themselves.

FROM the very beginning, the problems of coping with the threats to the health, safety, and welfare of the inhabitants of the area were greatly complicated by political and economic considerations. In addition, the affected people faced innumerable difficulties caused by bureaucratic delays, factional bickering, and, it appears, frequent bungling and mismanagement of the programs that the regional authorities had devised to cope with the poisoning of the area. All this, one gathers, played a part in instilling within at least a certain part of the population deepening suspicions of what the authorities might have in store for them, and over the last year such suspicions have resulted in a noticeable lack of coöperation with many of the official programs and sporadic bouts of active resistance to them.

A look at a map of Seveso and the surrounding area issued by the regional authorities which displays a revised demarcation of Zones A and B is enough to give one some indication of how public-health data concerning dioxin contamination has been a subject for political compromise or manipulation from the start. Within the cone-shaped area that was actually covered by the toxic cloud, the eastern boundary of the most severe contamination is depicted on this map as stopping in miraculous fashion along the straight western edge of the Milan-Como superstrada. It seems clear that this boundary was, in effect, gerrymandered by the regional authorities to exempt commercial and private traffic on the highway from the severe restrictions placed on all other traffic in the area, including traffic in the less contaminated Zone B. In excluding the superstrada from the sealed-off area, the authorities did not make known to the public who might use the highway what they themselves must surely have known—that some of the higher concentrations of dioxin in the entire area were to be found along the superstrada. (At one point in the superstrada system, at an exchange near the ICMESA factory, the concentration of dioxin is reported to have been measured at more than five thousand micrograms per square metre—a dangerously high level.) To judge from the events of subsequent months, the decision to allow a large flow of traffic to continue through the heavily contaminated stretch may have had unfortunate consequences for people living outside the immediately affected area.

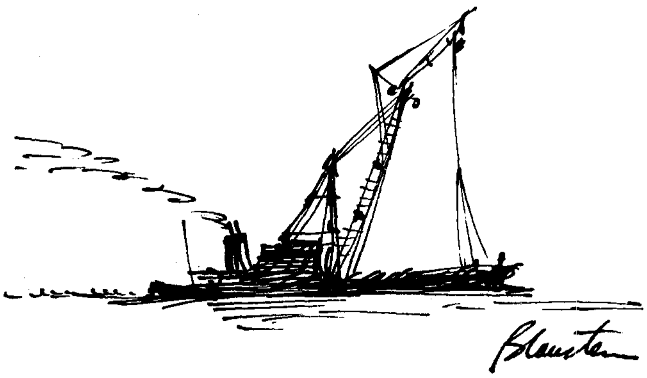
Although it was only natural for those in charge to be wary of exacerbating the fears of the people or creating a condition of panic among them, it appears that from the outset the authorities showed a strong interest in limiting the zone marked as heavily contaminated to as small an area as possible, and in treating the question of the hazards to which the population of Zone B and the Zone of Respect was subjected as very much a secondary matter. The difference in the official attitude toward the hazards existing in Zone A and those existing in the two other zones, combined with all sorts of inconsistencies in treating the dioxin threat in and immediately around Zone A, seems to have created, in the minds of many of the exposed people, not only confusion and a sense of frustration but also a certain cynicism about the safety measures employed—a cynicism that may have affected the attitude toward the dangers of the dioxin itself.

Even before the evacuation of Zone A was completed, some of the people in Seveso began to question how strongly the Lombardy regional authorities believed in the threat of dioxin. For example, late in July, while people were still living in Zone A, the authorities first forbade all entry into it by outsiders and then changed the rules to allow ten persons to enter on weekdays and twenty on Sundays. "When people in the area heard about these safety measures, some of them just laughed, in spite of the tragedy they were caught up in," one person familiar with the evacuation told me. "They would say to one another, 'So dioxin is twice as dangerous on weekdays as it is on Sundays?' " People noted that access to Zone A was guarded by soldiers who were supplied with neither face masks nor protective clothing. They also noted that no restrictions whatever were being placed on traffic moving through the area on the superstrada. Those who were evacuated from Zone A, although they had been formally notified that they would not be allowed to take with them anything but their clothes and some personal belongings, took as many of their possessions with them as they could manage. These possessions included furniture, cars, pickup trucks, baby carriages, and bicycles. Inevitably, many of the things taken out of Zone A were contaminated with dioxin.

Human nature being what it is, some of the people who had continued to eat fruit from their trees in spite of official warnings that to do so might be hazardous seem to have chosen to view dioxin as something less than a serious threat to health. Such a view was reinforced by doubts publicly expressed from within the Christian Democratic establishment concerning the gravity of the dioxin problem. On August 2nd, when the second group of people was evacuated from Zone A, one regional health official was quoted as assuring the public that "to die of dioxin, it would be necessary for a child to eat three hundred kilos of earth" from Zone A. Dr. Emilio Trabucchi, professor of pharmacology at the University of Milan School of Medicine and a member of the Italian Chamber of Deputies, publicly stated that the dioxin presented no real threat to health, and, to demonstrate that he meant it, Professor Trabucchi declared himself willing to go and live in Zone A and to drink dioxin-contaminated milk produced by cows on a small farm near the ICMESA factory. As it happened, though, the cows in the zone had to be slaughtered to protect public health.

The general effect of such declarations was, of course, to add to the confusion and to make people reluctant to accept the pronouncements of the regional health authorities—reluctant, even, to accept the good faith of those charged with helping to cope with their difficulties. The evacuees soon became vocal about the failure of the authorities to find them new houses to live in, rather than rooms in the hotel complex in Bruzzano. At the same time, there was growing discontent among them over the failure of the authorities to take some definite steps toward making their homes in Zone A habitable once more. Early in October, after the Army troops guarding access to Zone A had been largely replaced by carabinieri, several hundred of the Seveso evacuees broke through barbed-wire barriers and past police at the entrance points and reoccupied their old homes. "The demonstrators said they felt the danger from [dioxin] would have been washed away by recent heavy rains," a dispatch in the London *Times* reported. After holding out in their homes for a day, these people were persuaded by police to leave the zone. In twos and threes, or in larger groups, they came back, however, and, the Italian sense of home and family being what it is, the carabinieri guarding access to the zone were apparently lenient about letting people reënter.

Eventually, in an attempt to tighten security, the regional authorities ordered a fence about nine feet high and four miles long erected around the entire zone. It took the authorities seven months to complete the fence. The extraordinarily long time taken to finish the job was due partly to inefficiency but partly also to the fact that in places the fence was torn down at night as fast as it could be put up by workmen during the day. Through these breaches in the fence evacuees kept up a regular traffic back to their houses. Most went in to check up on



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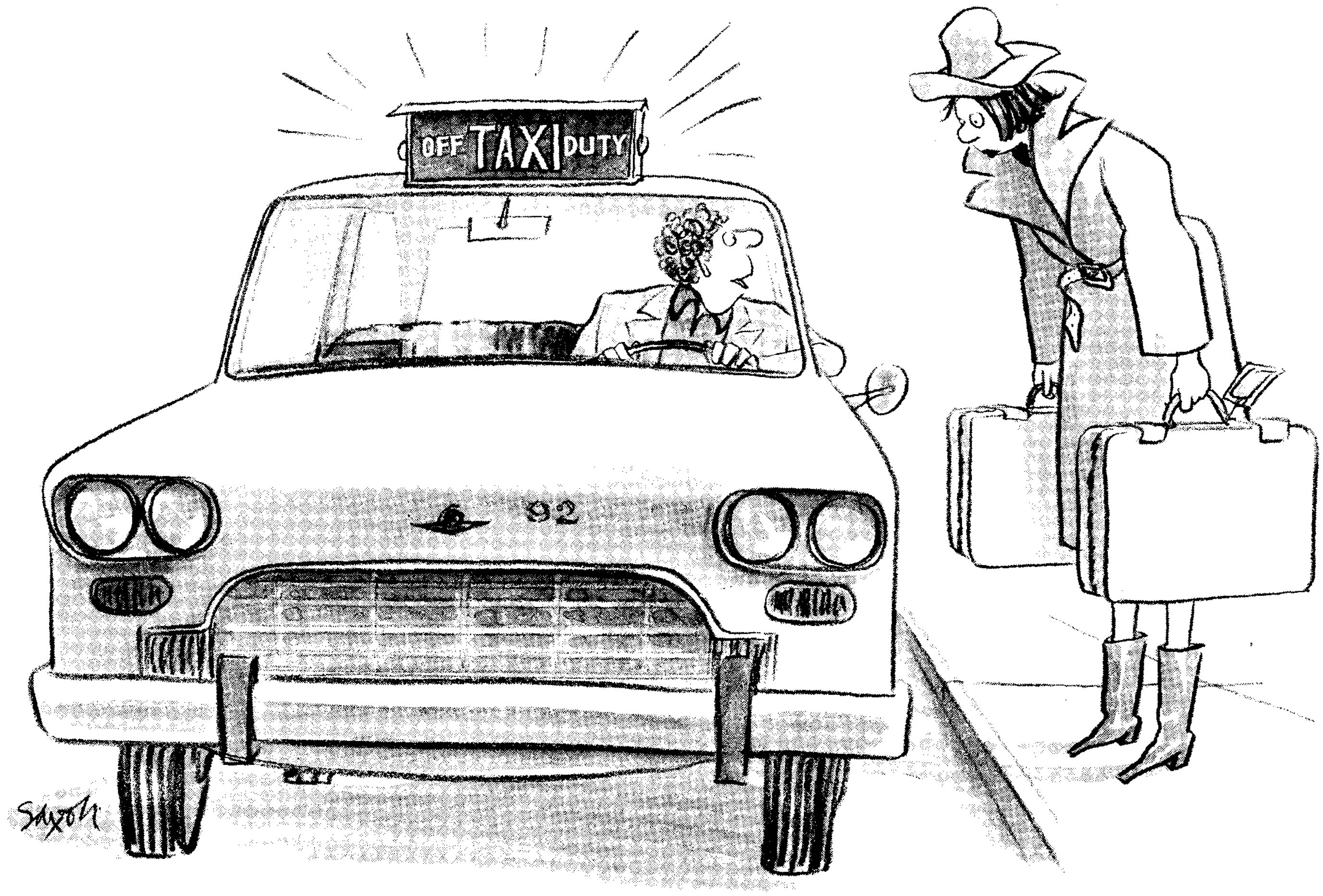

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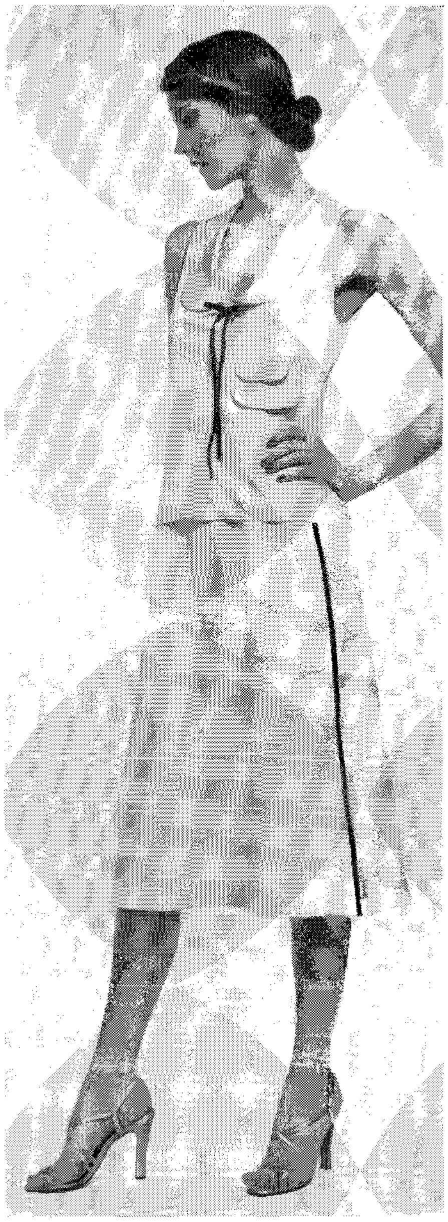

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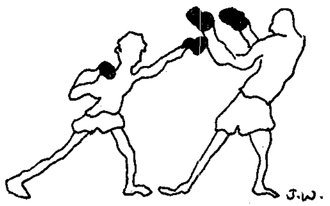
whether their houses remained undisturbed—some vandalism and looting within Zone A had been reported—but people were also removing their furniture to their new quarters outside Zone A. Some of the abandoned houses in the most contaminated zone were said to be used for lovers' assignations, and it was also said that on weekends children from Zone B had been seen playing and roaming around inside Zone A, where, presumably, they felt that their parents wouldn't be keeping an eye on them. In the third week in February of 1977, an Italian Army contingent of five hundred men of the 67th Mechanized Infantry Battalion was called in at the request of the regional authorities to protect the fence and prevent further unauthorized entry into the zone. But by that time a great deal of damage had been done.



An inevitable result of all the traffic in and out of Zone A was the spread of dioxin—by particles borne on clothes, furniture, and bedding—from the most contaminated zone into areas officially classified as habitable. Actually, this situation serves as a telling commentary on the contention maintained for years by the Dow Chemical people in this country. In reply to charges concerning the spread of the dioxin contaminant of 2,4,5-T into the environment here from civilian aerial-spray operations being carried on around the country, the Dow people said that dioxin residues, once laid down in spray or other operations, do not at all readily move around in the environment—first, because the dioxin becomes chemically bonded to soil it touches, and, second, because it is for all practical purposes insoluble in water and thus is not susceptible, for example, to leaching action. The aftermath of the Seveso accident shows that a number of forces, some of them natural and others the work of man, created conditions for the transport of dioxin-contaminated matter from the most polluted zone outward. These forces included strong winds that could blow soil particles and contaminated leaves, chaff, and other vegetation out of the zone. They also included the heavy automobile traffic sweeping along the edge of Zone A—traffic that was picking up dioxin contamination and carrying it north and south of Zone A and the whole Seveso area. And they included persistent rains. In October of 1976, unusually violent and continuous rains afflicted the whole of northern Italy for more than a month and caused extensive flooding of the most polluted part of Seveso. These floodwaters, bearing dioxin-contaminated soil particles, ran off into the Certesa, a stream that flows past the ICMESA plant and down to the eastern edge of the Zone of Respect, where it joins the Seveso River. During these fall floods, both the Certesa and the Seveso overflowed their banks. The Seveso runs through several communities to the south, including Cesano Maderno, and to the city limits of Milan itself, where it disappears into underground conduits and emerges to the south of the city. There the Seveso joins the Lambro, which joins the Po. Traces of dioxin have been found in mud as far south as Milan, thirteen miles away. Also, significant dioxin levels—whether spread directly by the toxic cloud or indirectly by the Seveso inhabitants themselves—kept turning up outside Zones A and B for months after the evacuation of the residents. And the incidence of chloracne among children of the inhabitants continued to increase.

By the end of October of 1976, out of several hundred suspected cases the number of confirmed cases of chloracne in the area was forty-four. Eventually, the number of confirmed cases rose to a hundred and eighty-seven. In September of 1976, the authorities had declared all schools attended by children in the area to be free of all traces of dioxin, but by early February so many children had come down with suspected cases of chloracne in six schools attended by children outside Zone B but inside the Zone of Respect that mothers were refusing to allow their children to attend them. As a result, the schools that were found to be contaminated were closed by the authorities in early February so that they could be decontaminated. According to the health authorities, epidemiologists suspected that schoolchildren had tracked dioxin into classrooms on the soles of their shoes. If so, some of the dioxin contamination may well have had its origin in the constant unauthorized traffic of Seveso families between their new quarters in the supposedly unaffected zones and their old homes in Zone A.

Significant signs of dioxin contamination were also turning up in other areas outside Zones A and B. In early 1977, it was discovered that in Polo, a

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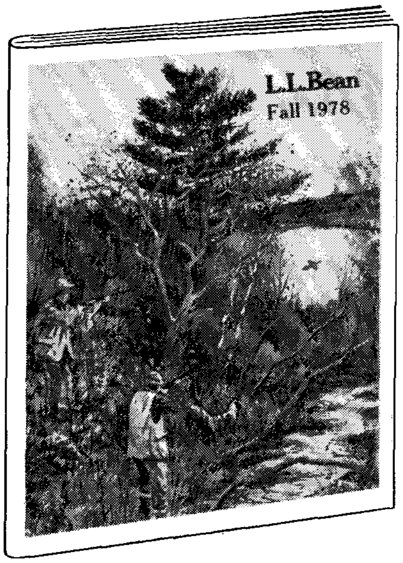

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community of thirty-five hundred people, lying to the east of the ICMESA plant, which had been considered only slightly contaminated and made part of the Zone of Respect, fifty-eight out of two hundred and eighty-three children examined had developed symptoms that were tentatively diagnosed as similar to those of chloracne. (Because ordinary facial acne is common among young people, the number of these children subsequently found to have true chloracne was bound to be much smaller than the number of suspected cases. But at least a dozen of the Polo children probably contracted true chloracne.) Then, in April, it was discovered that in the township of Cesano Maderno the grounds of fifteen small factories employing a hundred and eighteen workers were contaminated with dioxin at levels comparable to those in some parts of Zone A. According to Vittorio Rivolta, the head of the Lombardy regional health organization, these particular instances of contamination were thought to have been caused primarily by vehicles coming to the factories from more contaminated areas. After closing the factories briefly to check on dioxin levels, the authorities decided to deal with the situation by reopening the factories and ordering that the grounds be covered with asphalt.

In the meantime, the measures being taken or planned by the Lombardy authorities in the hope of reducing or eliminating dioxin contamination in the area were themselves presenting serious problems. Since the three sections of Zone A closest to the ICMESA factory were considered so contaminated as to be unreclaimable and uninhabitable within the foreseeable future, most of the organized efforts aimed at making it possible for evacuees to return to their homes were concentrated on Subzones A-6 and A-7, in the southern part of Zone A. There the initial reclamation plans called for the bulldozing and removal of all soil contaminated with dioxin at levels of above five micrograms per square metre. But this was an arbitrary figure, chosen in the rather forlorn hope that lower levels of dioxin in the soil would degrade naturally to insignificant levels in a reasonably short time—perhaps two or three years. This standard meant the bulldozing and removal of many thousands of tons of topsoil from Subzones A-6 and A-7 alone and the importation of uncontaminated topsoil from other parts of northern Italy to replace it.

Before the end of 1976, workmen began bulldozing contaminated earth into large piles; then the earth was loaded onto trucks and dumped in the more heavily contaminated part of Zone A. This was the part of Zone A that the authorities had decided on as the site for the high-temperature incinerator where the contaminated material would be burned to destroy the dioxin in it. (The soil itself would necessarily be destroyed as well.) Workmen also began attempting to decontaminate the houses in A-6 and A-7 by replacing roof tiles, washing and scrubbing down floors and walls, and removing many of the furnishings left in the houses. These contaminated materials were then trucked to dumping points in the more heavily contaminated part of Zone A. Chopped-down bushes, limbs of felled trees, and other vegetation from A-6 and A-7 were also added to the large piles within the more highly contaminated parts of Zone A. And then there were the piles of plastic bags containing the decayed carcasses of the thousands of animals and birds that had either been killed by dioxin during the first several days after the explosion or been subsequently slaughtered for public-health reasons. All this material was supposed to be incinerated at some future date.

The notion of incinerating such a vast amount of contaminated material in a huge furnace built within the township boundaries was, not unexpectedly, a disturbing one not only to the Seveso refugees but to the people still living within the unevacuated parts of Seveso and the surrounding communities. The principal objections had to do with the safety of the proposed incinerator. The thought of its operation gave rise in the minds of some of the people not to a vision of purified surroundings but to the spectre of some new and conceivably even more toxic cloud that, through inadvertence, might descend on them in the future. And there were other objections that were put forward at least as strongly.

THE effects of the toxic cloud on the local economy had been most serious. A great deal of the furniture produced in Italy originated in the Seveso area, and with all the publicity about dioxin contamination the sales of furniture from the area north of Mi-

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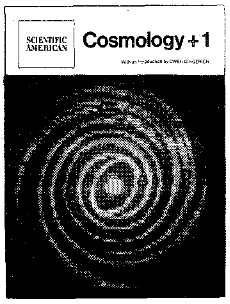

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lan dropped drastically. Before the explosion, newly married couples would often journey all the way from southern Italy to showrooms in the Seveso area to pick out bedroom and living-room suites, which they could buy at prices below the rates generally prevailing in Italy. Now they avoided the area and bought furniture originating elsewhere. Few outsiders wanted to take the chance of living with furniture that might be impregnated with dioxin. Some consignments of furniture for export were reported to have been turned back at the Swiss border. Seveso craftsmen considered this a particularly cruel touch, since the ICMESA factory was Swiss-owned.

The business of imported-timber merchants in the area was also seriously affected: sawmill owners were unwilling to handle stocks of stored timber possibly tainted with dioxin. Owners of and speculators in real estate found that there were no buyers for the properties. Hitherto prosperous masons, plasterers, and carpenters could get no new business. Contractors of all kinds were without work. Bakers found that many people would not buy bread, because they thought the stocks of flour might have been contaminated. The same applied to merchants who normally sold locally grown produce to people outside as well as inside the affected area; most of them either were without work or could get very few orders—a situation they were finding it extremely difficult to change. Even their contact with potential customers was being frustrated, because by order of the authorities access roads from the Milan-Como superstrada were closed to outside traffic. The fact that refugees from Zone A and some of the affected people from Zone B were being paid modest allowances by the Lombardy authorities (who were in litigation with the ICMESA company and its Swiss owners for the huge damages being suffered by the Seveso people) did little to alleviate the economic depression that had descended on the area along with the toxic cloud.

The prospect that these economic conditions might be worsened by uncertainties arising out of the plan to build a dioxin-burning incinerator in their midst caused some local businessmen at the beginning of 1977 to start organizing opposition to the incinerator project. In December of 1976, a group of these businessmen, most of them owners of real estate, had led a demonstration of Seveso citizens who formed a roadblock across the Milan-Como superstrada, disrupting all traffic for a full day, to protest the continued closing of access roads to parts of Zone B from the superstrada and certain other roads. After this protest, the businessmen extended their campaign to embrace the issue of the incinerator, on the grounds of both public safety and the prospect of greater economic losses to the area. By this time, the regional authorities had decided to go ahead with plans for the incinerator in the central part of Zone A, and the municipal council in Seveso had passed a resolution agreeing in principle to the scheme. But the opposition of the local businessmen quickly spread to include many Seveso craftsmen, and in May an angry demonstration attended by several thousand people from the Seveso area was held in central Milan to protest the proposed incinerator.

The turmoil and protest that spring also included an act of terrorism. Late in the afternoon of May 19th, while Dr. Giuseppe Ghetti, the local health officer for Seveso, Cesano Maderno, and six other small townships in the area—at the time of the ICMESA explosion he had had the responsibility of overseeing industrial-health measures to protect factory workers—was at his office in Seveso, three armed men burst in. One of the intruders pointed a pistol at Ghetti's forehead and demanded documents relating to ICMESA and other corporations, and when Ghetti vigorously reacted by attempting to throw his assailant out of his office he was shot and seriously wounded in the legs—the form of assault against political victims made notorious by Italy's leftist Red Brigades. Subsequently, copies of a proclamation issued on behalf of the terrorists who shot Dr. Ghetti were found about the Seveso area. During my visit, I saw a copy, which bore the name of no issuing organization other than Fighters for Communism. It began with the salutation "Worker Companions!," and it stated that Ghetti had "been hit by an armed proletarian nucleus" at his Seveso office. The proclamation charged Ghetti with various "criminal activities," including failure to take action before the ICMESA explosion to protect scores of workers at the Cesano Maderno plant of a company called ACNA, which used aromatic amines in the processing of pigments and dyes, from the allegedly fatal poisonous effects—

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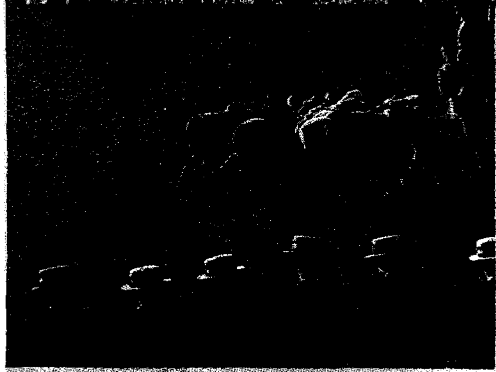

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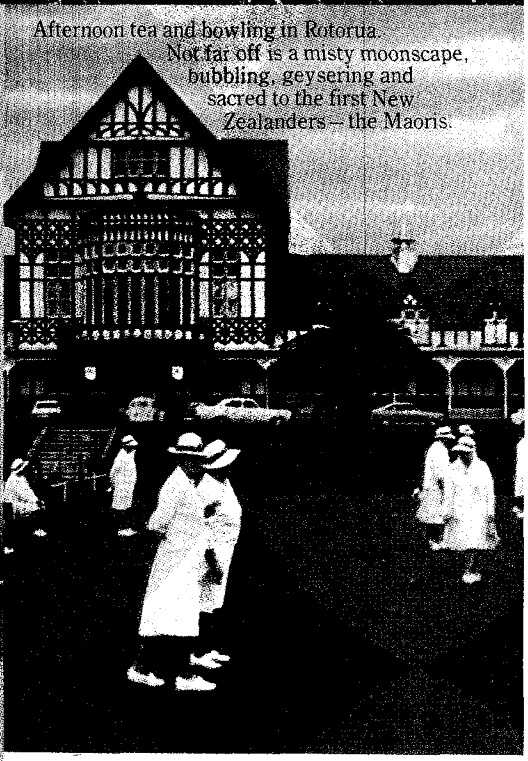

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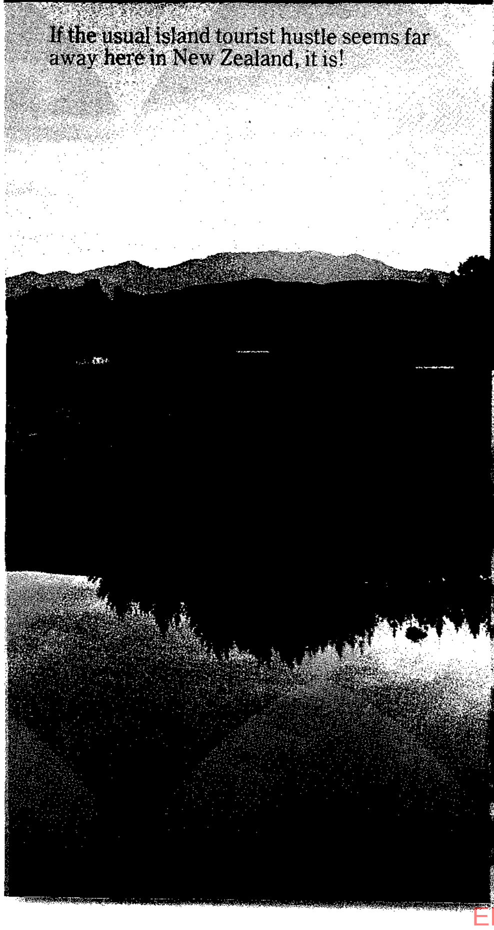

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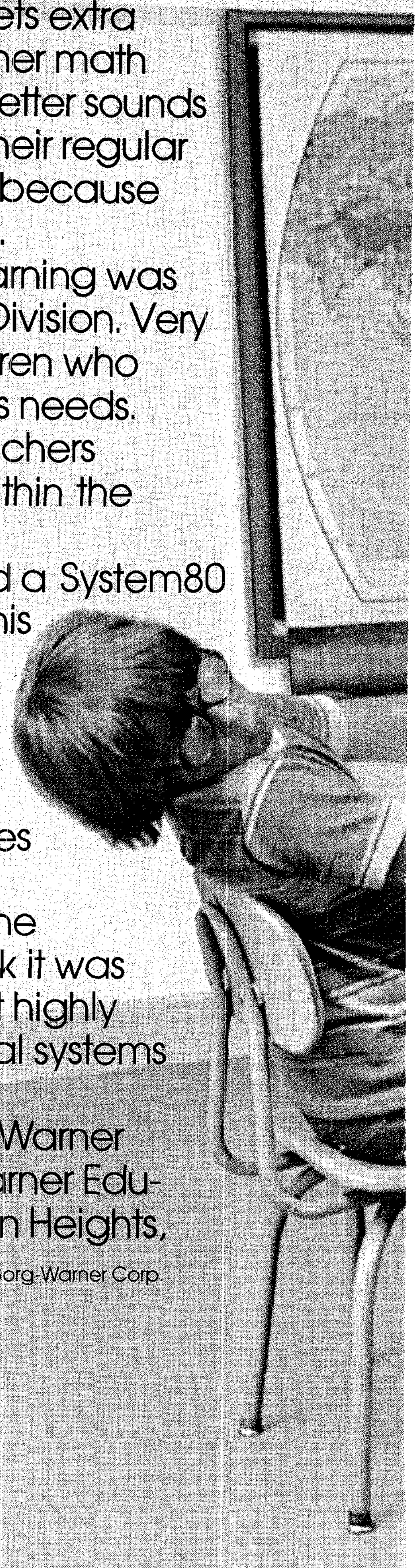

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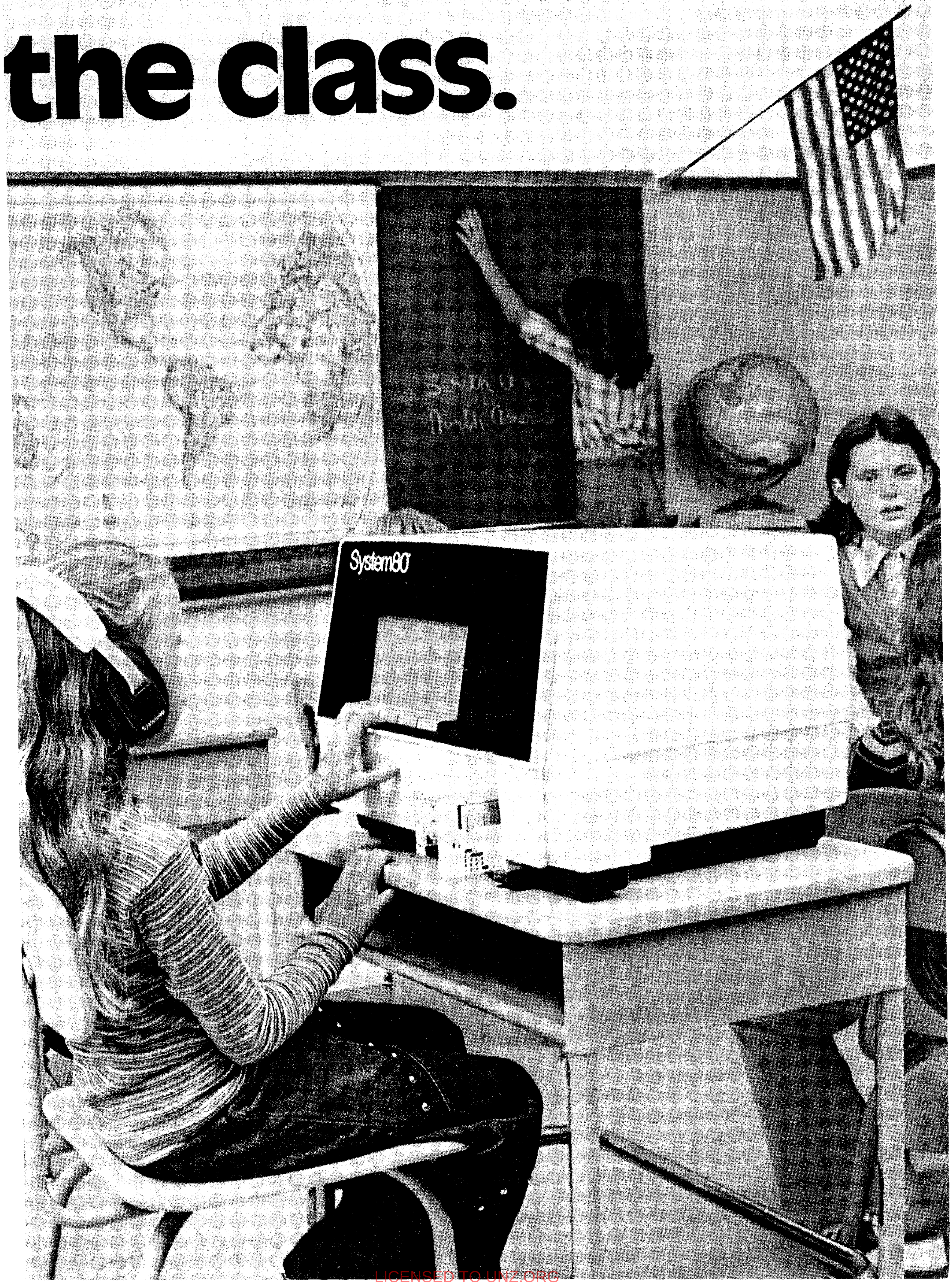

principally bladder tumors—of the factory's production process. Ghetti, the proclamation charged, was guilty of equally criminal behavior in failing to protect the health of the workers at the ICMESA plant and of the people in the surrounding area. It declared, "A man in the pay of the most criminal masters . . . G. Ghetti said nothing about the work being done at ICMESA. . . . Not only did he not say anything about [the real nature of the toxic cloud] after the July explosion, he hid and minimized what he had previously known and what today has become a spreading poison."

The attack on Ghetti, who is back at his job but still recovering from his injuries, was not the only terrorist act to be committed in connection with the Seveso disaster. On July 10, 1977, the first anniversary of the ICMESA explosion, terrorists bombed the home of Dr. Rudolf Rupp, an executive of the Hoffmann-La Roche Corporation who acted as liaison with the Lombardy authorities on decontamination procedures being carried out in Seveso, and who lived in Basel. Responsibility for the bombing was claimed by a group calling itself Commando July 10.

While these terrorist acts probably originated with extreme leftist militants operating out of Milan, rather than with people in the Seveso area, they certainly added to the anxiety of the Seveso people, and possibly increased the defensiveness of the regional authorities about their failure over the years to correct industrial practices and built-in hazards of the kind that had led to the ICMESA explosion. Also, the health authorities were becoming increasingly vulnerable to criticism because of their handling of programs to cope with the aftermath of the toxic cloud—in particular, their plans to contain existing contamination and monitor the health of people living in the affected area.

According to the authorities, the methods of bulldozing earth and cutting down vegetation in Subzones A-6 and A-7 and removing it to the heavily contaminated part of Zone A were being carried out efficiently and under rigorous safety procedures designed to keep decontamination workers from direct contact with dioxin particles and also to prevent any spread of dioxin from the work area into inhabited surroundings. All decontamination workers entering the fenced-off area were required to pass through a so-called filter station, where they stripped and changed into impermeable decontamination suits, boots, and hoods and put

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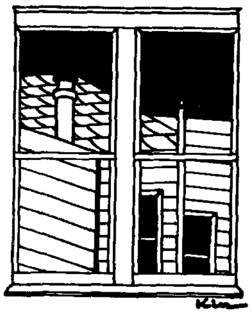
on face masks. After the work shift, they were required to shower and to hand in their decontamination suits, which were then placed in plastic containers for removal to contaminated-material dumps within the zone by the next work shift. The teams of workers assigned to bulldozing, vegetation cutting, and house decontamination in Subzones A-6 and A-7, which until late 1977 also lay within the fenced-off area, were supposed to be similarly masked and suited. Most of this work was carried out by a work force supplied under contract by a company in Milan. It appears that in practice many of the workers, who were mostly casual laborers, took a free-and-easy attitude toward the requirements. Workers wearing white or red decontamination suits were to be seen sitting and chatting in bars around the Seveso area. I was told by a medical man in the area that one day about ten workers wearing not decontamination suits and masks but T-shirts and shorts were seen playing soccer and kicking up dust in a part of Zone A where dioxin levels had been calculated at as high as one milligram per square metre. According to other people, the authorities attempted to deal with such flagrant safety violations by firing a few of the worst offenders, but instead of bringing about an improvement in work discipline the dismissals triggered a series of strikes by other workers, which were ended only when the offenders were rehired. The work of bulldozers piling up contaminated soil raised a tremendous amount of contaminated dust, which was often borne by the winds to points well away from the scene of the decontamination operations. Contrary to regulations, trucks passing out of the fenced-off area of Zone A were not always washed down. Trucks taking loads of contaminated soil or foliage to the central part of Zone A often had no covering over the loads, and from these trucks clouds of dioxin-contaminated particles flew around.



When bulldozing operations in Subzones A-6 and A-7 had progressed to a certain point, the authorities also began bulldozing parts of Zone B where unacceptable levels of dioxin had been discovered. Because of the relaxed work procedures employed, these well-intentioned bulldozing operations apparently meant the raising of more dioxin-contaminated dust. Then, the removal by truck of this contaminated soil—and also of loads of branches and foliage from trees cut down in parts of Zone B—to the fenced-off central part of Zone A caused, according to critics of the program, the spilling of even more contaminated matter from uncovered trucks on the roads and streets en route. And all this activity meant the appearance of white- or red-suited figures at more of the bars around the expanded work area.

A similarly casual attitude toward safety measures seems to have existed during the attempts to decontaminate buildings within the fenced-off area of Zone A and in Subzones A-6 and A-7. A worker named Giorgio Bottiani, who for several months was part of a crew assigned to decontamination operations in buildings, said in a deposition made in October of 1977 that the precautions taken to protect the health of the cleanup workers were minimal, that the overalls issued to them ripped with ease, and that the masks they wore gave them insufficient protection from dust. Bottiani also stated that during the first two months of his employment the toxic waste washed from the interior walls of contaminated houses was simply poured into washbasins, bathtubs, and toilets. From there, it might be conveyed in part into the surrounding ground from drainage fields or it might be fed by drain into the Seveso River, down which it could course through other municipalities toward Milan and the Po. After a number of protests against these practices, the contaminated waste water was collected in concrete tanks placed outside the buildings being cleaned. Then either the tanks were taken by truck to be emptied elsewhere or the waste in them was pumped through hoses from the tanks into a field lying just within Subzone A-5.

Further serious problems arose out of the attempts to reduce the contamination of the area affected by the toxic cloud. One of the grimmest concerned the disposal of the carcasses of the eighty-one thousand domestic animals that by June of 1977 either had died of dioxin poisoning or had been slaughtered as a sanitary measure in Zones A and B and the Zone of Respect. Most of these contaminated carcasses were still stored in plastic bags or fifty-five gallon drums in the central part of Zone A. According to critics of the decontamination program to whom I talked while I was in the Seveso area,

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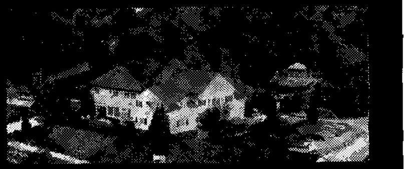

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however, some of the carcasses were not taken to this already contaminated area for storage but were taken to Milan to be burned in the incinerators of slaughterhouses—incinerators that I was assured were equipped to burn animal waste only at comparatively low temperatures. Yet a temperature of at least eight to twelve hundred degrees Celsius, depending on the duration of the incinerating process, is required to destroy dioxin. Moreover, any low-temperature incineration of material contaminated with dioxin and dioxin precursors involves the risk of actually *creating*, by heating dioxin precursors, more dioxin than already exists in the contaminated material and releasing it into the air. And, of course, the transport of the dead animals in itself meant some risk of spreading dioxin contamination along the roads.

Resentment among people in the area against what they saw as increased health hazards actually created by the authorities who were supposedly protecting their health was becoming marked. People in Zone B were complaining openly about the transport of contaminated material between one zone and another. Not only were trucks constantly carrying loads of contaminated earth and vegetation from parts of Zone B—in particular, Cesano Maderno—into Seveso for piling up in Zone A but trucks were also carrying vegetation cut in one section of Zone B to dump sites in other parts of Zone B. The councils of various municipalities in the area, including Seveso, fell to squabbling among themselves over the issue. The people of one municipality wanted no part of any other municipality's contaminated material. By summer, there was an air of revolt brewing in Cesano Maderno against the constant movement and spillage of contaminated earth and vegetation. A number of women in the community, indignant at the sight of so many trucks loaded with dioxin-contaminated material bouncing along roads in the area where their children played, banded together and placed themselves in front of some decontamination trucks, effectively stopping the traffic. In Seveso itself, more than a hundred women blockaded other routes used by trucks bearing contaminated material. This particular blockade lasted several weeks. The result of the demonstrations was to bring the trucking of contaminated materials to a virtual standstill through the whole affected area.

In Cesano Maderno, dissatisfaction reportedly reached the near-riot stage when, in June, a local medical officer, having ordered three cows belonging to a small farmer within the town limits to be slaughtered for laboratory analysis of the possible dioxin content of their internal organs, had the carcasses buried in a pit dug in an inhabited area within the municipality. Residents of the area where the cows were buried were so incensed that some of the men dug up parts of the carcasses and deposited the decomposing remains on the doorstep of the Cesano Maderno town hall. It was even said that a cow's head and entrails had been placed in the mayor's parlor as a further sign of displeasure with the way the decontamination program was being carried out.

Evidence of dioxin contamination throughout and beyond the area that was originally considered to have been affected continued to increase, even in places that previous measurements had indicated were dioxin-free. Late in June, traces of dioxin were found at a nursery school in Seregno, several miles to the east of Seveso, and that same month the discovery of dioxin in two schools in Nova Milanese, about five miles south of Seveso and eight miles north of Milan, forced the closing of these schools so that attempts could be made to decontaminate them.

In spite of such evidence, it appears that during the summer of 1977 the regional authorities did not carry out any systematic measurements of dioxin levels in schools in Zone B. Decontamination operations in the schools appear to have been carried out only sporadically and on the most impromptu basis. As the beginning of the new school year approached, it became clear that a considerable number of schools were in fact contaminated with significant traces of dioxin—even schools that earlier in the year had been examined and pronounced dioxin-free. "During the summer-vacation period, the responsible people in the region simply didn't seem to think it essential to clean up the schools before their opening," one of the physicians monitoring the health of the inhabitants told me. When the time came for the schools to open, hurried tests of dioxin levels indicated that more than a hundred schools in municipalities around Seveso were contaminated—only at low levels, the authorities insisted, but contaminated nonetheless. As a result, a hundred and twenty-four schools of a hundred and

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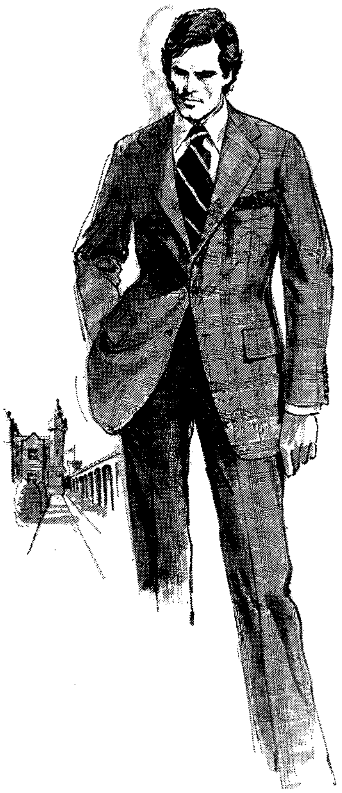

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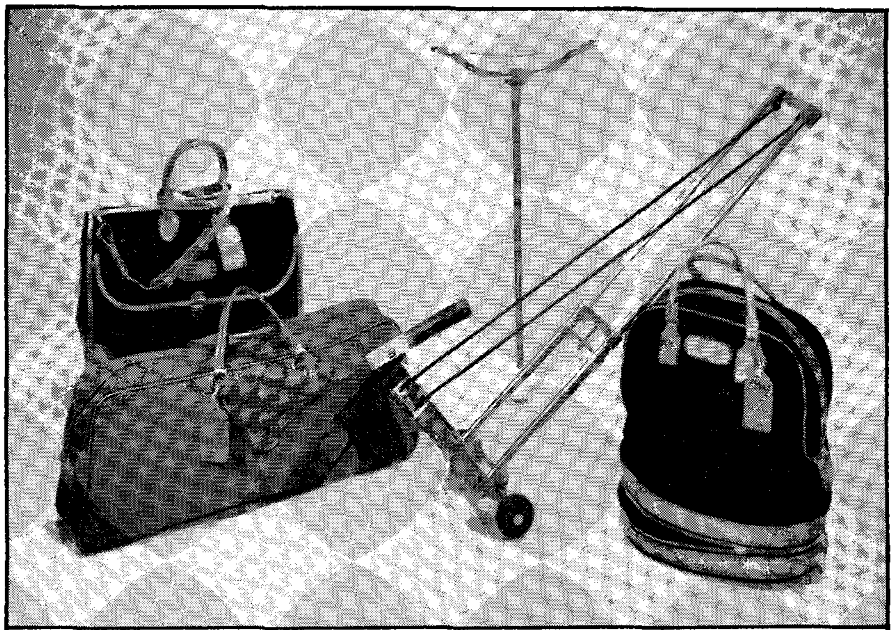

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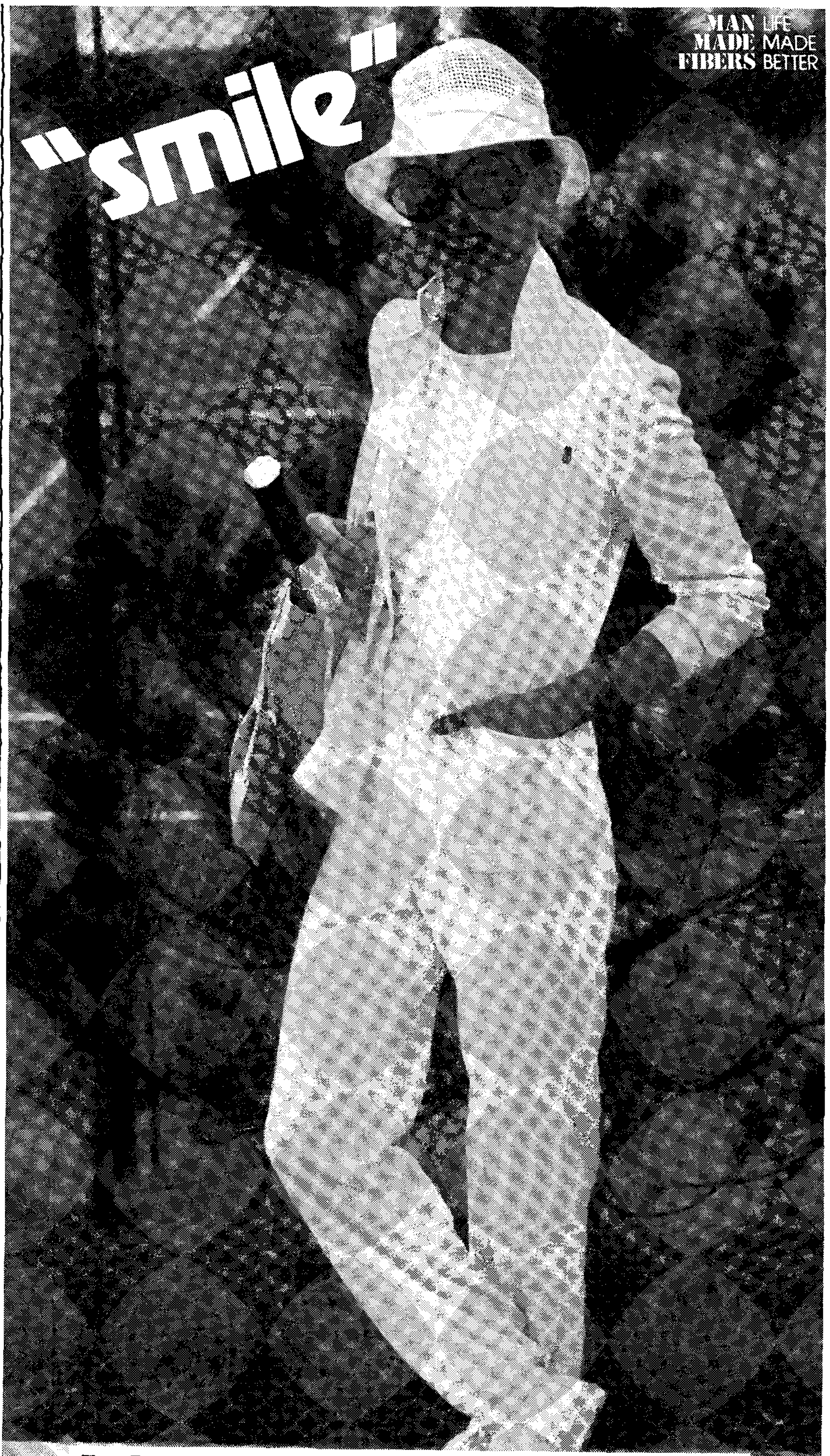
thirty-three tested had to remain closed until cleanup procedures and further tests could be carried out.

In October, it was discovered that a new prefabricated nursery school that the Swiss government had installed to the northwest of the ICMESA plant was contaminated with dioxin, and at levels as high as twenty micrograms per square metre. According to information given me by Dr. Gabriella Grimaldi, who has been working at Desio Hospital as a consulting psychologist dealing with evacuated Seveso families, earth used as fill around the school had been brought in by contaminated trucks and bulldozers, and she said that there were charges that some of that earth had originated in a contaminated part of Seveso. An even more disturbing allegation concerning loose decontamination procedures was reported to me by Dr. Grimaldi and confirmed by other people in the area. According to Dr. Grimaldi, after the ICMESA explosion the bodies of many of the poisoned animals had been stored, pending postmortem examination, in plastic bags in a gymnasium in the basement of the De Gasperi Primary School in Seveso. During this initial period, the school was closed. Then, after the carcasses were removed and some decontamination operations were carried out, the school had been declared dioxin-free, and it had been reopened for classes. Dr. Grimaldi told me that nineteen children at the school had subsequently developed chloracne, though medical examinations of the children which were made well before they attended the reopened school had shown no signs of chloracne among them. Indeed, according to Dr. Grimaldi, at the time of the ICMESA explosion most of the children had been away from Seveso on holiday and thus out of contact with the toxic cloud.

Even after the cleaning operations were undertaken and the schools were reopened, in the fall of 1977, there appeared to be no guarantee that with the constant traffic of pupils the schools would not become contaminated again before long. This prospect stirred up tremendous turmoil among the teachers at the schools, leading to a series of protest demonstrations and actions by the teachers' union, including teachers' strikes. Individual teachers demanded the right to be transferred at will from schools in various communities south of Seveso without penalty to their careers. When the Milan provincial education authorities eventually gave in and allowed such transfers, many of the students began insisting that if the teachers didn't have to remain on premises that were likely to be contaminated with dioxin the students should also have protection from exposure. They began strikes and demonstrations of their own, particularly in Cesano Maderno. Some of the older teen-age pupils commandeered a large high school, and one day in November several hundred students held a public rally in the central railroad station. The essence of their protest was not that they should be excused from attending school but that the health authorities should be compelled to take stringent precautions to protect the well-being of those who did attend school. What the students were demanding for themselves and their fellow-pupils was a series of regular health checks at school, including regular monitoring for signs of dioxin poisoning—checks that they declared the student body had never been given.

DIOXIN contamination was clearly continuing to show up outside the formally restricted area, and in such a way as to make almost farcical the official maps supposedly delineating its borders. To add to the confusion, there appeared to be no way of knowing whether newly discovered pockets of dioxin contamination in areas farther away from the site of the ICMESA explosion were there as a result of the mechanical transport of dioxin from the contaminated area or had been there since the explosion and had simply not been properly measured. One difficulty was that the original measurements of dioxin levels in the soil of various areas were made using samples taken many metres apart, and the levels shown in these samples were used to draw a picture of a hypothetical continuum of contamination of the terrain. But the assumption of such a continuum proved to be wrong: the dioxin fallout apparently descended in irregular fashion and, in many instances, varied not merely from one sampled spot to the next, perhaps fifty metres away, but almost from one square metre to another. As a consequence, inhabitants moving through an area that supposedly contained uniform and acceptably low levels of dioxin contamination might actually be picking up and carrying along with them much higher levels, from small pockets of highly contaminated soil or other material.

Another difficulty was that the process of analyzing soil samples was a complex one, requiring difficult chemical separation and extraction procedures and the interpretation of signals given



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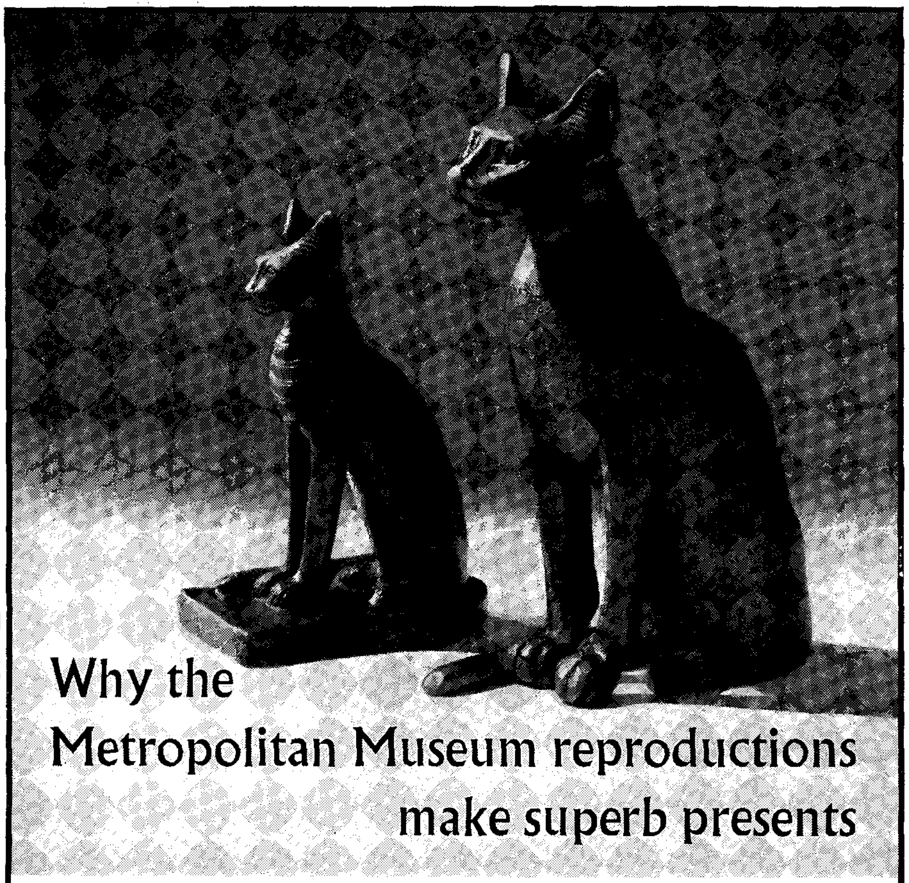
by gas-chromatograph and high-resolution mass-spectrometry equipment; in fact, it demanded technical skills of a sort possessed by relatively few specialists in a very few laboratories scattered through the Western world. Most of the soil-analysis work arising out of the Seveso disaster had been assigned to people in the School of Pharmacy of the University of Milan; while they had the necessary equipment, the sheer amount of the work involved and the pressure under which it had to be done must have strained their resources and made at least some analytical errors almost inevitable.

This was at least an understandable scientific difficulty. But what did most to increase the problems of coping with the aftermath of the Seveso disaster and looking after the welfare of the people in the area was the chaotic political situation prevailing in Lombardy, as in the rest of Italy. A bureaucratic morass seemed designed to engulf any urgent social endeavor. This was exemplified in what happened to the plans to handle the health problems of people in the area. Originally, Vittorio Rivolta, the regional health official, who is a Christian Democrat, was supposed to have complete control over the committees set up to supervise various aspects of the project: epidemiological studies and clinical work, the decontamination program, and the analytical work on dioxin levels in human and animal tissues. Political-party influence and standing played a great part in the composition of these committees, and it was not long before all sorts of disagreements and conflicts, some of them scientific but many of them political, divided not only the various committees but the various members of each. There were also financial problems caused by the tortuous workings of the ramshackle Italian bureaucracy. For example, a grant was made by the Italian National Institute of Health, in Rome, to the Lombardy region to provide the regional authorities with qualified chemists from the institute to carry out the necessary analytical work on dioxin contamination. But in practice it proved almost impossible to recruit chemists from Rome on any long-term basis, because most of the chemists were already obliged to have second jobs in Rome in order to subsist on their low salaries. It appears that those chemists who did come to Milan soon returned to Rome, because Italian regulations forbade their being paid a living allowance of more than some fifteen dollars a day even in as expensive a city as Milan.

Before long, the whole program for the protection of the Seveso people was seething with quarrels and machinations, not only in the ruling Christian Democratic Party organization but also in the Socialist, Radical, and Communist Parties. Almost every detail of the work of the committees became a party matter, with the minority parties being determined not to allow Rivolta and the Christian Democrats to exert permanent control over the committees. In May of 1977, therefore, Rivolta abolished the existing committees and put all the Seveso epidemiological, decontamination, and analytical programs, along with certain others, in the hands of a newly created Special Office, with headquarters in Seveso, at a seminary near the ICMESA factory. The purported aim of this reorganization was to make all the operations more efficient by centralizing them under one authority. The director of the combined operations, Antonio Spallino, who is also the mayor of Como, would report directly to the president of the Lombardy region, Cesare Golfari, and so would presumably keep control of the programs and the people working on them in the hands of the Christian Democrats.

The regional authorities said that the Special Office, which began operations in summer, would breathe new life into the attempts to deal with the Seveso emergency, but the immediate effect was to deprive the work of what continuity had been provided by a number of dedicated professional people and technicians. For one notable example, toxicological and other analytical studies that were being carried out by specialists at the Mario Negri Institute for Pharmacological Research, in Milan, were simply taken out of the institute's jurisdiction, and much of what these specialists had been doing was never handed over to any of the groups under the authority of the Special Office. Further, most of the available literature on dioxin contamination and toxicological studies in the field is in English, and only a small fraction of it has been translated into Italian. This presented no problem for the specialists at, for example, the Mario Negri Institute, many of whom had studied in England or the United States and were fluent in English. But now, because Spallino and apparently everybody else connected with the Special Office—not to mention the people in the regional health headquarters in Milan—understood not a word of English, the greater part of the technical literature on dioxin was simply inaccessible to the people directing the dioxin-decontamination operations. Spallino himself was a lawyer, and, so far as I was able to determine, had no particular experience in chemistry or medicine or toxicology. The disbanded committee on epidemiological studies was not replaced by another committee as such. Although one of the supposed virtues of the new Special Office was that its work would be carried out in Seveso itself, specialists could not be persuaded to leave their jobs in Milan and come to work in Seveso. In some instances, the hazards of working in Seveso may have been responsible for this attitude, but many of the specialists were dependent on political connections for their jobs in Milan, and they were unwilling to exchange their existing, often politically precarious, working arrangements for work that was potentially even more politically precarious.

The work that the new Special Office seems to have pushed forward with the most vigor was the bulldozing of contaminated soil in Subzones A-6 and A-7 and its removal to dumps in the fenced-off central part of Zone A, together with the cleaning and repainting of houses in the two lower areas in anticipation of the return of as many evacuees as possible by late fall. But these efforts seem to have been made at the expense of such necessary work as carrying out systematic health monitoring of people living in the entire affected or potentially affected area, and containing the spread of dioxin by human and motor traffic. From the time the Special Office was established, complaints were heard all over the area that funds theoretically made available for Seveso by the Italian central government and the Lombardy regional government weren't there when needed. As a result, much vital work supposedly being done under the Special Office either slowed to a halt or was never started, even when safety considerations demanded prompt action—work such as regular and thorough surveys and chemical analyses of dioxin levels at schools in the area and the necessary cleanup of school premises. Partly because of such difficulties, and partly because political bickering came to afflict every part of the handling of the Seveso affair, the Special Office staff and associated groups were plagued by the resignations of medical and other specialists—people who in trying to carry out their work had



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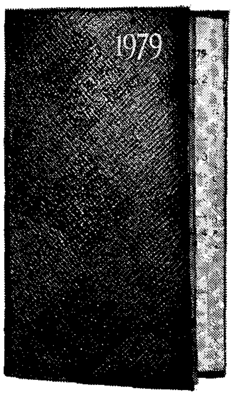

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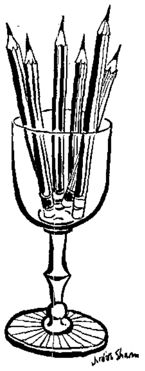
come to feel so frustrated by bureaucratic and other snarls that they simply gave up and left. With the disbanding of the epidemiological-study committee, most of the responsibility for monitoring the health of the people fell to a small and overworked group of physicians at the Desio Hospital.

The ever-mounting official confusion and disorganization had a marked effect on the attitude of the people of Seveso and the surrounding area, many of whom became skeptical of the usefulness of the programs meant to cope with the aftereffects of the ICMESA explosion. Increasingly, evacuees from Zone A turned their backs on the authorities, on the politics of the disaster, on the official advice being tendered, and, it seems, almost on the idea of dioxin itself. They had become so wearied by their difficulties that they wanted only to get back into their houses as quickly as possible, no matter who might say what about the hazards involved. Many of the people stopped cooperating with the health authorities, and simply refused to turn up for scheduled health checks.

For example, the original epidemiological program provided that people who had been or were about to be examined by clinicians would be given special health cards, which they could present on future visits to any clinics they might go to in the region, so that doctors treating them would be alert for symptoms related to dioxin exposure. "Most of the people simply threw away their cards," a physician who had formerly been associated with the health program told me. "Even many of the women who were pregnant at the time of the explosion just tore their cards up before they went to the hospital to have their babies. They were ashamed to admit that they had been exposed to dioxin on the day of the explosion." Moreover, many people shunned the official clinical examinations and relied for medical advice on their private local doctors, with whom, as it happened, the formally constituted health authorities had no effective communication about prevailing health conditions. In general, the Seveso people came to believe that, given all the conflicting official information offered about the dangers of dioxin, their own judgment about the hazards they faced was probably as good as any, and perhaps better. And this judgment often led them to resist the very idea of an imminent dioxin danger.



One person who has had regular contact both with the Seveso evacuees and with people in Zone B since the toxic cloud descended is Dr. Laura Conti, a Communist member of the Lombardy regional council, who is also the current head of the regional health and ecology commission, and when I was in Milan I had a talk with her. Her political position on the programs for handling the aftermath of the Seveso disaster appeared to be a curiously mixed one. Though she displayed a sort of Party contempt for local officials who had not helped correct industrial conditions leading to the ICMESA explosion ("They shot Ghetti because he was stupid," she told me), she also, as a functionary of the Communist Party now acting in concert with the Lombardy Christian Democrats, seemed to have generally supported the actions of the regional authorities after the explosion. (She was one of the officials who voted to gerrymander the superstrada out of the prohibited zone in Seveso.) While she was deeply sympathetic to the plight of the Seveso evacuees and those living in the affected area, she also disdained the reaction that some Seveso people had to the health issue. When I made some mention of "the terrible experience" I thought the Seveso people must have been exposed to, Dr. Conti said, rather sharply, "It hasn't been such a terrible experience for most of them, because they never really understood the danger." She went on to talk about the attitude of many of the Seveso residents toward the outbreak of chloracne that developed in the area, mostly among the children. "You have to realize that in Italian folklore skin diseases are not considered as real diseases," she told me. "They have a saying in the Veneto area, where a lot of the Seveso workers come from—'An outbreak on your skin means that all's well inside.' " While the prevailing view of the effects of the explosion was a fatalistic one, she went on, the people in Seveso who came from the South, and might perhaps have been expected to take a more superstitious view of the disaster, in fact reacted in a more rational fashion than many of the northern people. "People from the South tended to see that danger really was there, and when they could they sent their children away after the explosion to stay with relatives in the villages they came from," she said. "The natives of Seveso and the people from other parts of the North were more of a problem. They tended to take the attitude that if children came into the world malformed, through whatever circumstances, it was God's will." But she felt that under the fatalism lay feelings of anguish and guilt. "Actually, some of the people who must now be considered at the greatest risk, because they lived closest to the ICMESA factory, feel the guiltiest," Dr. Conti said. "Just because they lived near the factory, they knew long before the explosion that chickens, rabbits, and other domestic animals were dying off right in their own back yards. And they would take the carcasses to the factory management and get ten thousand lire"—about twelve dollars—"for a dead chicken, provided that they promised not to report the death to Ghetti. Since the ICMESA explosion, these people have naturally found it difficult to face the thought that what they really sold was not a chicken here and there but the health of their own children. They can't bear it. And so such people try to insist that what they hear about dioxin can't be true—that dioxin can't be so harmful."

Dr. Conti told me that at a meeting held early in 1977 between Seveso people and representatives of the official health-monitoring groups to discuss the rising rate of chloracne among children of the area some of the Seveso people present maintained that it could not be true that dioxin was harmful, as was continually stated. According to Dr. Conti, they believed a story circulated by one of their number that during the war in South Vietnam the Agent Orange laid down by the American military in defoliation operations "made the bananas grow a foot long, so the rats grew a foot long, too." And some Seveso people at the meeting who were living in Zone B not far from the Zone A demarcation line claimed that since the toxic cloud descended rats a foot long had appeared in Seveso. "I asked them, 'Have you yourselves seen these big rats?' " Dr. Conti said. "They said they had. They said they stayed up at night with sticks to ward off the rats from their homes. My own speculation about what may actually have happened is that because the wheat and oats that were growing on the small farms in Zone A at the time of the explosion had gone unharvested, the rats in the area had grown fat on them."

As time went on, some people's resistance to acknowledging the reality of the dangers of dioxin contamination seemed to increase, while others apparently felt increased indignation at

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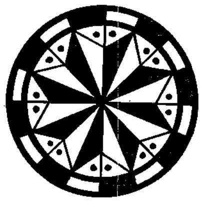
the ineffectuality of measures supposedly being taken to minimize the dioxin threat. But there could be no doubt about the desire of the Seveso evacuees to return to the homes they had been forced to abandon, particularly in Subzones A-6 and A-7, and so strong did this desire become that attempts by anyone to demonstrate the dangers of dioxin contamination in the area tended either to be largely ignored or to be construed not as contributions to the strengthening of public health but as some subtle plot against the welfare of the community. Thus, attempts made by a so-called People's Technical and Scientific Committee, a largely leftist group, to warn people outside Zone A about both the immediate and the long-term dangers of dioxin contamination over a broad area around Seveso appear to have failed almost completely. "The real problem of the committee has been to get the people themselves to recognize the nature of the problem," the committee secretary, Antonio Chiappini, who until shortly after the explosion had himself worked as a laborer at the ICMESA factory, told me. Nonetheless, he added, he still had hopes that more people would attend meetings of the committee "and hear the message about dioxin."

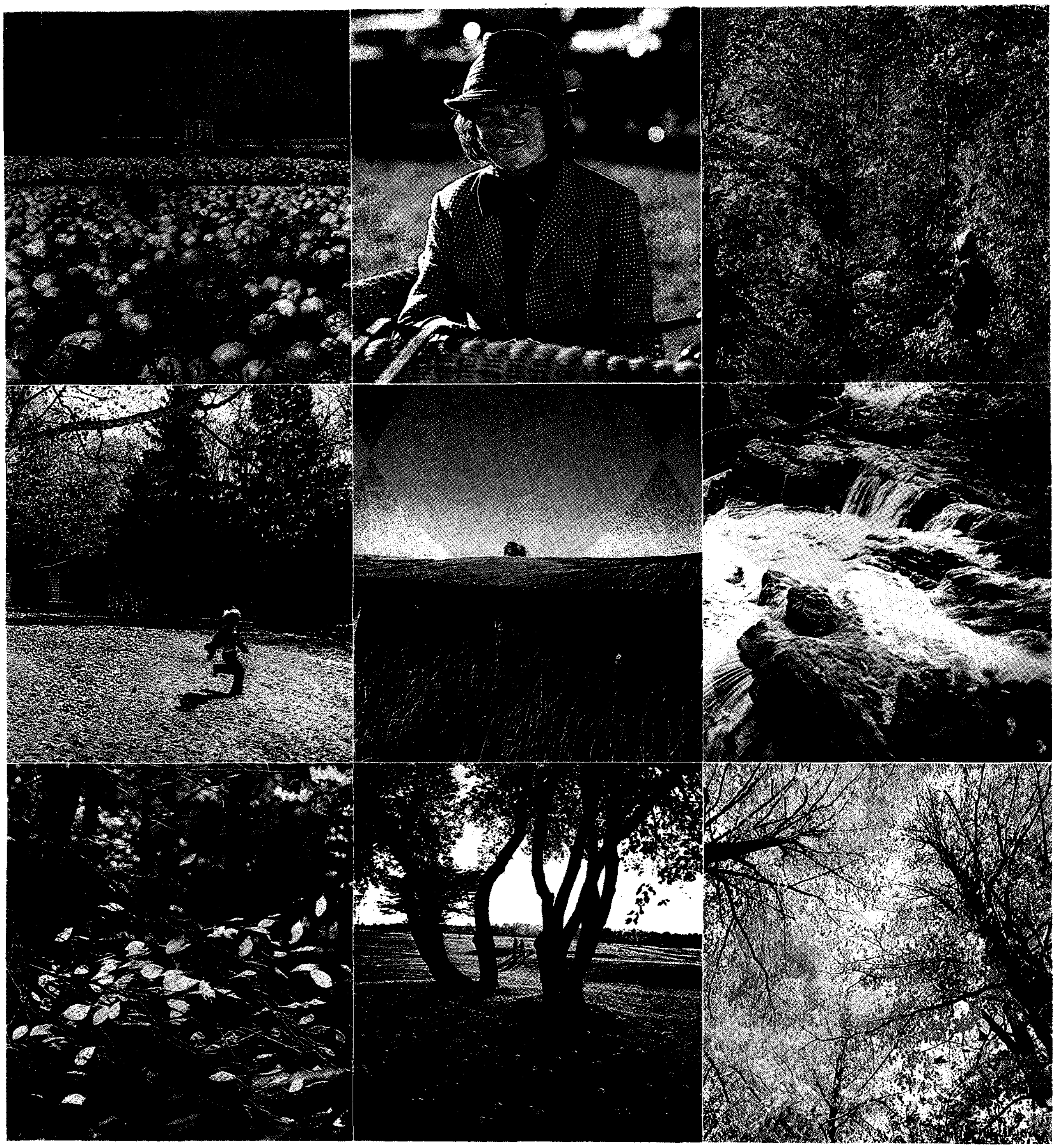


But—if what I was told by toxicologists formerly connected with the epidemiological-study programs in Seveso was true—in addition to the reluctance of many of the people in Seveso and the adjacent area to face unpleasant facts about the spread of dioxin around them, and its toxic potential, there were signs of outright sabotage of certain scientific programs that had been undertaken to measure the possible bioaccumulation of dioxin in the Seveso environment. According to the toxicologists, when scientists planted experimental plots of carrots and other vegetables in the more heavily contaminated parts of Zone A, to determine whether dioxin in the soil might be incorporated into the structure of growing vegetable matter, some of the plots were vandalized again and again, the carrots being ripped out of the ground and removed. Similarly, when some rabbits and guinea pigs were placed in wire enclosures in parts of Zone A in experiments designed to measure the rate of absorption and accumulation of dioxin in the internal organs of the animals at differing contamination levels in the soil, scores of the experimental animals were stolen or killed on the spot. One of the scientists connected with these sabotaged experiments commented, "A faction within the Seveso population hates to have further confirmation of the dangers of dioxin, and has evidently been ready to use any means to stop experiments that might provide such confirmation."

Such incidents reflecting the underlying tensions and conflicts within the population remind one of Ibsen's "An Enemy of the People." The drama's protagonist, the physician Dr. Stockmann, having discovered that the water of the health spa for which his town has become well known is in fact dangerously contaminated, attempts to circulate public warnings concerning the nature of this health hazard. But, instead of receiving, as he anticipates, the gratitude of his fellow-townspeople for performing a valuable public service, Dr. Stockmann finds himself running afoul of local economic interests and forces of laissez-faire, for whom his information is highly inopportune. And such is the reluctance, growing into resistance and outright hostility, encountered by his attempts to convey the unpleasant truth that eventually the unfortunate doctor becomes not a local hero but a community outcast.

WHEN I drove back out to the Seveso area from Milan along the Milan-Como superstrada on a damp day after my talk with Mayor Rocca, it was through a mist rendered pungent and oppressive by the industrial pollution that permeates the whole area north of Milan. The landscape I drove through was dreary—smoking industrial installations interspersed with cement-block apartment buildings and stuccoed houses, mostly of recent construction and of unengagingly uniform appearance. No traffic signs were necessary to remind me where to turn off for Seveso. The presence of the most heavily contaminated part of the area touched by the toxic cloud was proclaimed on the west side of the superstrada by yellow-and-black signs reading "Zona Inquinata" ("Contaminated Zone") and by a tall yellow corrugated-plastic fence that extended from near the Seveso exit northward along the highway as far as I could see in the mist. I did not turn off into Seveso then but continued north. At one point, I noticed two children playing just off the edge of the highway and within a few feet of the yellow fence.

After about a mile, as the superstrada



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and the yellow fence curved to the left ahead of me, I glimpsed, looming out of the murk and within the prohibited zone, a complex of squat buildings and girder-surrounded distillation towers that I recognized from photographs as the ICMESA factory. A little farther along, I came to an elevated stretch of the superstrada, and I could see the ICMESA buildings much more clearly than before. I could also see, to the east of this complex, the circular outlines of the foundations of two large concrete silos that had been under construction when the explosion occurred. These foundations, I knew, were now used for storing some of the thousands of animal carcasses that had been gathered in the northern part of Zone A. I could also identify, from my memory of press photographs of the plant, the building housing the trichlorophenol reactor that had gone out of control, and, protruding from its roof, what I took to be the vent from which the plume of poisonous vapor and particulate matter had burst upward, to disperse in the wind as the toxic cloud. It was an eerie experience just to consider what was within that particular building now. Nobody knows precisely how much dioxin is still in the reactor, but the vessel has been estimated to contain three or four tons of trichlorophenol mixture, now in solidified form, including perhaps three hundred grams (two-thirds of a pound) of dioxin—an awesome quantity, considering its almost incomparably high toxicity. At the time of my return to Seveso, the building containing the reactor was considered so unsafe that only a few well-protected technicians had entered it since a few days after the explosion seventeen months previously. How and when, if ever, this chemical time bomb can be defused, or removed to any conceivably safe storage place, presents a question to which nobody has yet devised a satisfactory answer.

Once I had passed the northern end of the yellow fence, I left the superstrada and turned south, and after a few more turns I found myself at a big iron gate marking the entrance to the ICMESA plant, right on the edge of the prohibited zone. The gate was guarded by several carbine-bearing Italian Army soldiers, who were standing about casually chatting. They were wearing disposable blue decontamination suits of some paperlike material, and also white face masks, but not on their faces. Two of them were wearing the masks on the back of an arm, nestled on the elbow. I continued south, along the perimeter of the upper part of the zone. I was unable to see anything more inside the tall yellow fence; later on, I was told that the abandoned houses in the upper part of the zone lie amid an expanse of vegetation that has grown so uniformly thick as to obliterate most of the existing features of the landscape, such as roads, pathways, and garden fences. Most of the furniture that remained in these houses after the earlier comings and goings of the inhabitants was apparently removed by decontamination crews during 1977 and thrown into pits that had been dug in Subzone A-5 and lined with concrete. I learned that the large piles of plastic bags containing animal carcasses that had been stored aboveground in A-5 were being buried in other lined pits in A-5.

I continued driving south to a point beyond the southwest corner of the zone enclosed by the yellow fence, and then, spotting a little café called the Trattoria Savina, I stopped off and ordered a cappuccino at the bar. At a few tables in the café, men were sitting quietly playing pinochle. While I was sipping my cappuccino, I got into conversation with a short, grandmotherly woman behind the bar, who, I learned, was a co-owner of the café. Her name is Agnese Galimberti. She told me that the street the Trattoria Savina was on was the Corso Isonzo, which lay just outside the Zone A boundary. She said that after the ICMESA explosion and the evacuation, the regional authorities had closed the Seveso entrance and exit from the superstrada that connected directly with the Corso Isonzo and kept them closed for about fifteen months, and that, since a good part of her business in the past had come from passing traffic, she had had hardly any customers during all that time—and, of course, none from among the people who had been evacuated from Seveso. She said it was only now, with the reopening of the superstrada connection and the return of many residents to their homes in A-6 and A-7, that her business was returning to normal.

I asked her how seriously people in the area seemed to regard the hazards of dioxin.

Signora Galimberti replied, "Rather than think about dioxin, they just think about going back to their homes." She went on, "Getting ill—how do you know it's dioxin if you're ill? People

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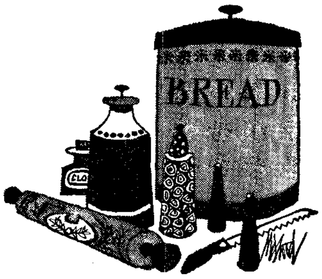
died before dioxin came along, too! Nobody knows anything about what dioxin does or doesn't do. A few people may be afraid to go back, but only a few. The others are happy. Did you know that the Archbishop of Milan is coming here to Seveso on Saturday to bless all the houses the people have been moving back into? Oh, yes! This means he's giving his approval to the whole thing."

When I left the Trattoria Savina, I drove east along the Corso Isonzo into Subzone A-6 and among the houses that Seveso evacuees were reoccupying. The area gave the impression of a building project that had been just about but not altogether completed. Much of the ground was still unadorned by grass, trees, and bushes, and the side roads were newly oiled. Most of the houses were two-story detached dwellings of stuccoed cement block with red tile roofs. Only two or three people were about on the streets. Then I came to a turn that brought me within about eight feet of the yellow fence enclosing the zone. Right on this corner was a solidly built house, with an as yet unpainted stucco finish of a sort of buff-rose color, and with the usual red tile roof. Outside the house stood a small cement mixer, and near the cement mixer a man dressed in work clothes was building a low cement-block retaining wall. I stopped, got out of the car, and introduced myself. He told me that his name was Mafaldo Sartor, that he was forty-eight years old, and that he was a construction worker "on the artisan level" and a contractor. He showed me into his dining room, apologizing as he did so for the unfinished condition of the place. He and his family had started to move their belongings back only a week ago, he said, and a lot of work still had to be done. He said that to him his dwelling was "a beautiful house;" long before the ICMESA accident, he had built it with his own hands over a period of a year and a half, working Saturdays and Sundays. I could see that the carpentry around the place had been done with great care. The dining room was a good-sized one, with a large table, over which hung, as a sort of centerpiece to the room, two ornate chandeliers. Along one wall was a large walnut breakfront, heavily carved, with glass doors. We sat down at the table, on which stood a bowl of flowers, and we were joined by Signor Sartor's wife, Edda; their daughter Maria Grazia, who was twenty-two; and their son Claudio, who was eleven.



Signor Sartor said that the whole family was pleased about getting back home after a long dislocation—an experience he described as "*bruttissima*." Signora Sartor said that when they began returning their things to the house, "just from the emotion of moving back home I couldn't sleep all night—it's something you can't describe." Signor Sartor said that when the ICMESA explosion occurred the family surmised that something must have caught fire at the factory, because of the cloud and the smell that accompanied it. He said that they had remained in the area twenty-two days before being evacuated, and that for the first week they had eaten fruit from their trees and vegetables from their garden—until the authorities told them not to. When they eventually left their house, for a motel at Assago, forty-six kilometres away, that was a terrible experience, he said, "but living in the motel where we were evacuated was worse—just one room for the whole family, and it was like living in a psychiatric ward." He went on, "The health authorities wanted to kill our dog, Pipperi, but we hid him and managed to take him away with us. The dog had started to feel bad, and had been vomiting and had diarrhea."

"I'll never forget all the cats, and the way they died in the days after the cloud came down!" Signora Sartor said. "There were seven or eight cats right around our house. Their eyes swelled up and came right out of their heads. They got very thin, and as soon as they died their flesh seemed just to burn up. In three days, only the skeletons were left—it was as though the bones had been picked clean. And the birds—they just fell to the ground out of the air. I had some two-year-old hens. The day after the accident, they stopped moving and laid no more eggs. They were finally taken away from us by the health authorities. A neighbor of ours had chicks that had hatched. They all were deformed and died."

As for the health of the family itself, Signor Sartor told me that, for whatever reason, he lost twenty-six pounds in two months after the explosion. Fortunately, the children did not develop chloracne. But both he and his wife be-

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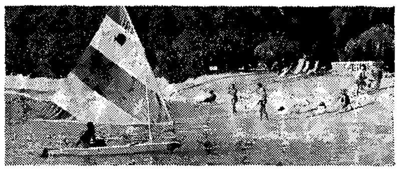

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came terribly nervous and suffered greatly from worry—"a terrible time of stress that none of us will ever forget." He said that one of the things that had distressed the family most was the invasion of press, radio, and television reporters into their home and the homes of other residents, and the relentless way these reporters had pried into the lives of those who were being evacuated. "All the media people came here from England and France and Germany. And some of them were saying out loud among themselves—and I could understand it, because they happened to be speaking in Italian, to a journalist from Milan—'Just think, in two years all these people will be dead.' And they were standing there saying to one another, 'They'll just fall down like overripe pears.' That upset us the worst."

It seemed clear that in the months after the evacuation Signor Sartor had managed in one way or another to visit his house from time to time, even though doing so was officially forbidden, for he said that thieves had stolen things from his home on three different occasions, making off with clothing, bedding, rugs, and tools. He said that almost all the abandoned houses in Zone A had been looted. During the time they were away, his family had had only one desire, and that overwhelmed all other considerations: to get back into their house. He himself had very little sympathy with the various demonstrations that were held locally from time to time concerning the dangers of dioxin; he thought they were "politically oriented" and were probably organized by outsiders. The net effect of these protest demonstrations, he declared, was only "to slow down the people's return to their homes in Seveso by perhaps five months." He expressed no bitterness against the Givaudan or Hoffmann-La Roche Corporations. He referred to the owners of the ICMESA factory only as "Switzerland." "Switzerland has paid us for the furniture that was taken away and buried as too contaminated," he said. "Switzerland has also paid for the cleaning of the houses. And they've given us compensation to cover most of our other losses, too."

About the supposed dangers of dioxin he said, "We don't really know what may have happened to the people's health. One authority will say one thing, and another will say something else. As for me, I believe what I see. I've heard that dioxin isn't as dangerous as it's been made out to be. We're back home again—that's what

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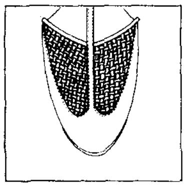
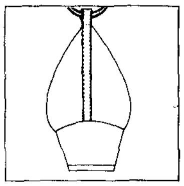
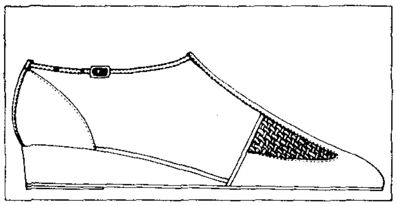


front view



back view



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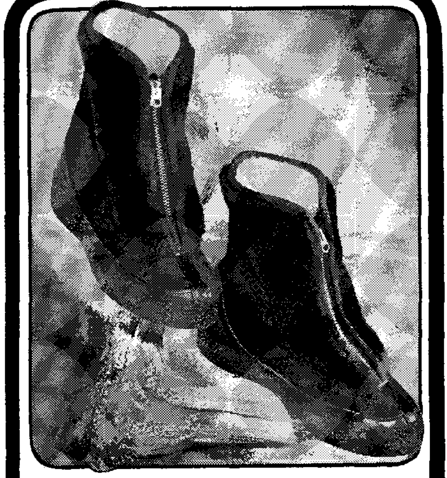

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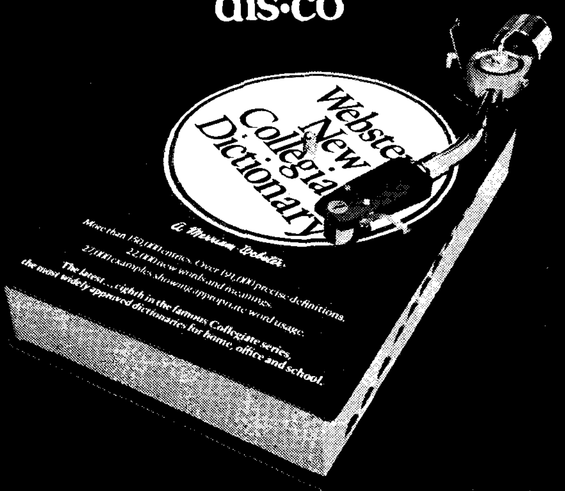
counts for us. Tonight will be the first time we have slept in our home in all these sixteen months. The dioxin story is finished for me. On Saturday, the Archbishop of Milan is coming here to bless all the houses. Including this one. The Archbishop himself will say bye-bye to dioxin."

THE next day, on my way out to Seveso again from Milan, I stopped off in Cesano Maderno to look around the center of town. It was the noon hour, and almost everything was closed. Here and there, on side streets, one could glimpse what Cesano Maderno must have looked like even as recently as a quarter of a century ago—courtyards surrounded by old buildings, many of which must have been stables or sheds for livestock or feed. But it seemed that nearly all such buildings had been torn down and replaced by apartment buildings or stores. The place had a prosperous air. I saw one or two furniture showrooms along the main street, with pieces that obviously weren't to be acquired cheap. Walking along one street, I spotted a pastamaker's shop that was open. I went inside, introduced myself to the proprietor, and explained that I was just passing through. The proprietor, a man of about fifty, stood at a clanking machine that resembled a printing press, turning out sheets of meat ravioli. He told me that he made meat ravioli in the morning and spinach ravioli in the afternoon. I said I was on my way to Seveso to talk to people there about their circumstances and the question of dioxin. The last word was hardly out of my mouth before the pastamaker waved both arms above his head as though he were fighting off flying objects. "*Diossina! Diossina! Diossina!*" he cried out, in an aggrieved voice. He said that the dioxin issue had brought him nothing but misery. At the time of the ICMESA accident, he said, he had been operating a pasta shop in Seveso, which was then his main place of business, as well as the one in Cesano Maderno, and that a couple of weeks after the descent of the toxic cloud the police had come to his Seveso shop and told him to stop making pasta, because the flour might be contaminated with dioxin. He told me that he was still allowed to make pasta in his Cesano Maderno shop, but that "if the customers don't see you producing it fresh, you get only half the price." He said that he had been refused compensation for the loss of business caused by the toxic cloud, and that his business had suffered so much that he had had to lay off four men, who badly needed the work. But some families who were moving back into Subzones A-6 and A-7 not only had their houses completely renovated free but had got ten or twelve million lire in compensation as well—"a good two years' salary." He went on, "There's so much corruption over this Seveso affair. People are getting rich on it. There's been a lot of funny business going on. What if Switzerland comes to the authorities and asks, 'What have you *done* with all the money we've been required to pay out for resurfacing roads, and so on?' How could they answer?" He said that all the bigger woodworking factories in the area saw to it that they themselves were well taken care of. "Lots of carpenters, craftsmen, the little fellows—they got nothing from Switzerland. But the big fellows got plenty. One got three hundred million lire in compensation. That's the way things were."

IN Seveso again, I dropped by the Special Office, on the western edge of Zone A, near the ICMESA factory. I was hoping to get an appointment with the head of the office, Signor Spallino, to discuss the current situation in Seveso. I had been trying for many days without success to make contact with Spallino. I had managed to talk several times with his principal deputy, and he kept telling me that Spallino was busy but that perhaps a meeting could be arranged. At one point, Spallino's deputy had told me that I would probably be able to catch Spallino the next day in Milan, where he was going to "see the minister." The deputy advised me to stay by the telephone in my hotel room that morning; he would arrange an interview, he said, and would call to give me the details. I had stayed in my room all morning waiting for his call, but it never came. I was unable to reach the deputy by telephone. At noon, further action was made impossible by the arrival of the Italian lunch hour, which lasts until three o'clock—and after that, of course, it was too late to see Spallino. That's how things tend to go for anyone dealing with officialdom in Lombardy. I had also been trying for quite a while to get in touch with the press officer for the Special Office, a man named Sergio Angeletti, and when I finally did reach him I hastened to make an appointment to see him for a few minutes, mostly in the hope of arranging a meeting with Spallino.

I found Angeletti in a small room on the second floor of the Special Office. He is a stout man, with a long, bushy beard and with fringes of long hair at the sides and back of a bald pate. His manner was harried. He told me that Spallino was still very busy, but promised to try to get me an appointment with him and to let me know as soon as he succeeded. We talked for a few minutes. In answer to my questions, Angeletti said that soil-decontamination work in the entire area affected by the toxic cloud had ceased months earlier. "The people don't want to hear any more about decontamination work," he said. "They don't want dioxin removed from their soil. In one municipality, they refuse to accept the soil bulldozed from another municipality. The people don't want to see trucks and bulldozers—they think that if dioxin is in the soil, that is the best place for it to stay." He gave me a few figures—how many families were moving back into A-6 and A-7, and so on. He said that he was a journalist by profession, and that he had come to work for the Special Office thinking that he could contribute a public service. But things were difficult, he said. "I felt in coming here that it would be a good thing if a job like this could be filled by someone who wasn't a politician," he told me. "I wanted to play no political games. But, you know, they're nearly all Christian Democrats on top in this region, and I've had the impression that my lack of political motivation is proving to be a worry to the people around me. Every day, I realize more and more how politically motivated everyone at the Special Office is." Reaching for a sheet of paper, Angeletti drew for me some organizational charts with little boxes. He told me things were getting complicated for him personally. There was intrigue everywhere. He pointed to the boxes on a chart he had drawn and said that one faction was trying to have him shifted, in what was theoretically a promotion, to the position of "coördinator" in the Special Office, but that that was really a move to lessen his contact with the press. Everything was politics, he said again. I told him I'd keep in touch with him about the talk with Spallino.

THAT evening in Seveso, I attended an informal meeting of a small group of businessmen who had been particularly active in opposing the construction of a giant incinerator in Zone A. The meeting was held in the office of Aurelio Lunghi, a tax accountant, who was a man of some stature in the local business community. I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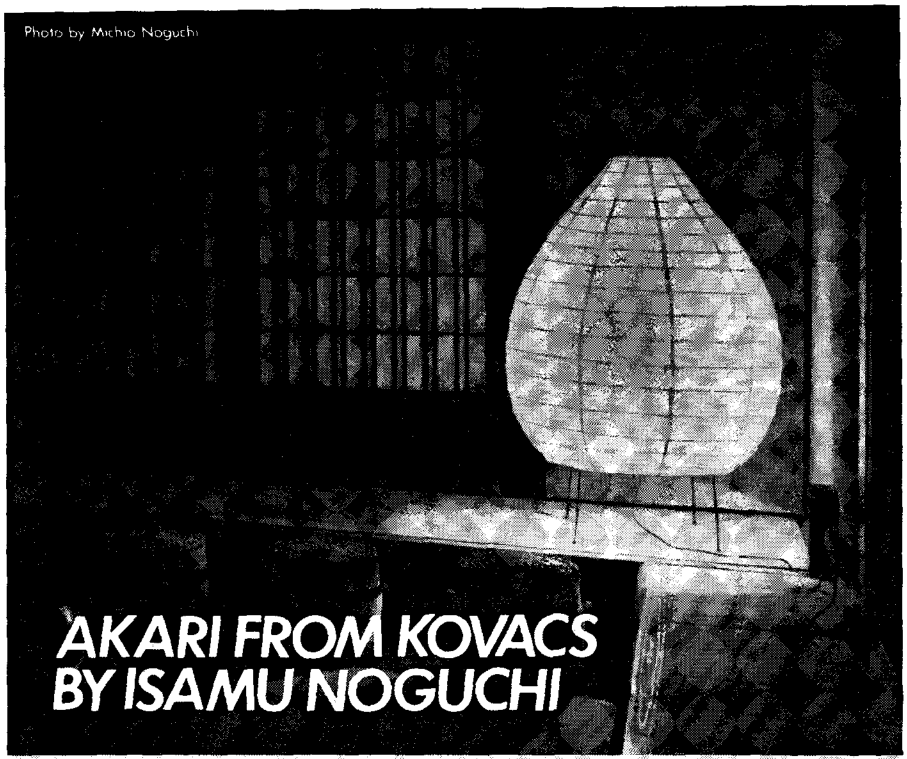
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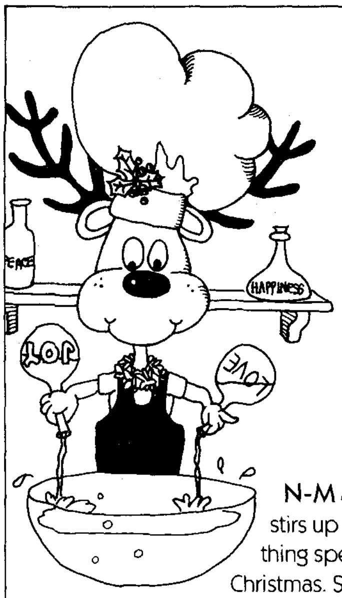

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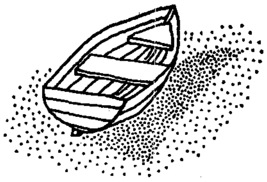
had been invited to attend by Luigi Campi, a well-to-do importer of timber, whose business takes him to such faraway places as Gabon and Australia in search of woods to be used as veneer for the Seveso-made furniture.

At the meeting, Lunghi offered the opinion that the seriousness of the chloracne problem in Seveso and the surrounding area had been "grossly exaggerated" in the press, and said that this probably applied to the dioxin question in general.



Campi agreed. He said that the problem was "not as large as people have made out." Its seriousness had been exaggerated for political and monetary reasons, he went on, adding, "We are, after all, in the country of the *bustarelle*"—the "little envelopes," a reference to the prevailing system of bribes for getting things done. "And the bigger the problem is made to seem, the bigger the amount of money to solve it becomes, and the bigger the number of sharks who are there to get their share."

Nobody present seemed inclined to dispute Campi's statements.

The consensus appeared to be that the construction of a high-temperature incinerator in Zone A to destroy dioxin would, besides posing a further danger to health in the community, compound the economic difficulties that had already been suffered by businesses in the area. There were denunciations of the "ineptness and arrogance" of the regional authorities concerning the decontamination program. One after another of the businessmen spoke up to point out particular disadvantages of an incinerator.

"Just think. They talk of burning three hundred thousand tons of soil—and for only a few grams of dioxin."

"It sounds like a mad thing. To do all that, the incinerator would have to be the size of Milan Cathedral!"

"It would take them fifteen years to incinerate all the material."

"Consider the enormous running costs."

"We know that since the ICMESA explosion the Lombardy administration would like to see a big incinerator built for taking care of *all* industrial wastes in the whole area—not just dioxin. So they pick on Seveso, saying to us, 'You need to get rid of your dioxin anyway.' "

"The authorities think they can get the incinerator for nothing—they would make Hoffmann-La Roche pay for it."

"And bring all their wastes to Seveso to burn—not just for fifteen years of burning but for an indefinite period after that. And ruin Seveso forever."

"The risks are absurd."

"I was born in Seveso, and I want to die in Seveso. But not from dioxin. I am a white-collar worker. There was a time when I was a partisan, and we partisans knew how to act when we had to. Recently, I told a friend, 'If they put an incinerator in Seveso, we'll use dynamite! We'll use bombs!' "

Some time after the meeting got under way, Mayor Rocca showed up. He smiled at everyone as he came in, but I had the feeling that he hadn't been invited. He had once been in favor of the incinerator, but he now left no doubt that he had changed his mind. After he had aired his views on the subject, he asked the assembled businessmen why the group had been organized.

"Because you didn't do your job," a man sitting next to the Mayor told him tartly.

Mayor Rocca then reiterated that because there had been no lasting health problems as a result of the explosion the incinerator was unnecessary. The talk turned to the question of the spread of dioxin from the most polluted zones to other communities. On this point, the Mayor turned out to have a view of his own. "The wider dioxin spreads around, the less of it people are exposed to," he said.

Hearing this, I reflected that although the people in the ever-expanding areas affected by the apparently continuous transport of dioxin through the whole region might not appreciate what was drifting their way, the Mayor's view wasn't so very different from the position taken by the Dow Chemical Company in the United States: that although dioxin might be one of the most toxic substances known to man, if you spread it around enough—for example, in 2,4,5-T spray operations every year over millions of acres—any hazard to human beings in the total area covered may be reckoned as being shared by everyone there without discrimination, in a sort of democracy of risk.

THE next day, I decided that if I was ever to manage to see Spallino I would have to dispense with niceties. Just before the noon hour, I drove to the headquarters of the Special Office, more or less barged in on Angeletti, and told him that I had to speak with Spallino. I found Angeletti even more harried-looking than before. He said that the Special Office was in a state of crisis. That very morning, about nine-tenths of the staff had sent a letter to Spallino offering their resignations. According to Angeletti, these people said in the letter that their working conditions had become impossible. Decontamination workers had been bringing an increasing number of lawsuits against the Special Office and the regional health authorities, claiming injury to their health as a result of dioxin contamination, and in these suits they were naming, as co-defendants, personnel of the Special Office, claiming that the people there were negligent in protecting the workers' health. Angeletti said that the staff of the Special Office found themselves defenseless against these accusations. "They have no protection on the part of the politicians" in the regional or provincial government, he said, nor did they have any protection against legal attacks against them instigated by the workers' unions. "Now every worker who has taken part in the decontamination program and has developed a red spot goes to the lawyers," he said, "and makes legal complaints citing the Special Office staff people as culprits." The staff people were demanding protection against such negligence suits, he concluded, and the place was in an uproar.

Rather hardheartedly, considering the circumstances, I said that I still needed to talk with Spallino. Signor Angeletti sighed and said he would do what he could. He left his office, and returned after a few minutes. He said that Spallino had to go to Milan but that he intended to have a quick lunch first, and he could hear my questions while he was having lunch. I said that that would be fine. Angeletti and I went out to a nearby trattoria to get together with Spallino. He proved to be a wiry-looking man in his forties, who was a sharp dresser. At the trattoria, which had the inevitable lunchtime complement of card players, Spallino had picked a table from which he could see a television set mounted on one wall, which was showing an Alpine slalom race. Spallino must have been a sports fan, because he kept an eye on the television screen during a good part of the interview.

I began by speaking about the stress that the Seveso people had been subjected to. Spallino said that the people who were moving back into their homes were naturally glad to be able to do so but that "the unknown scientific aspects" of dioxin had indeed caused a

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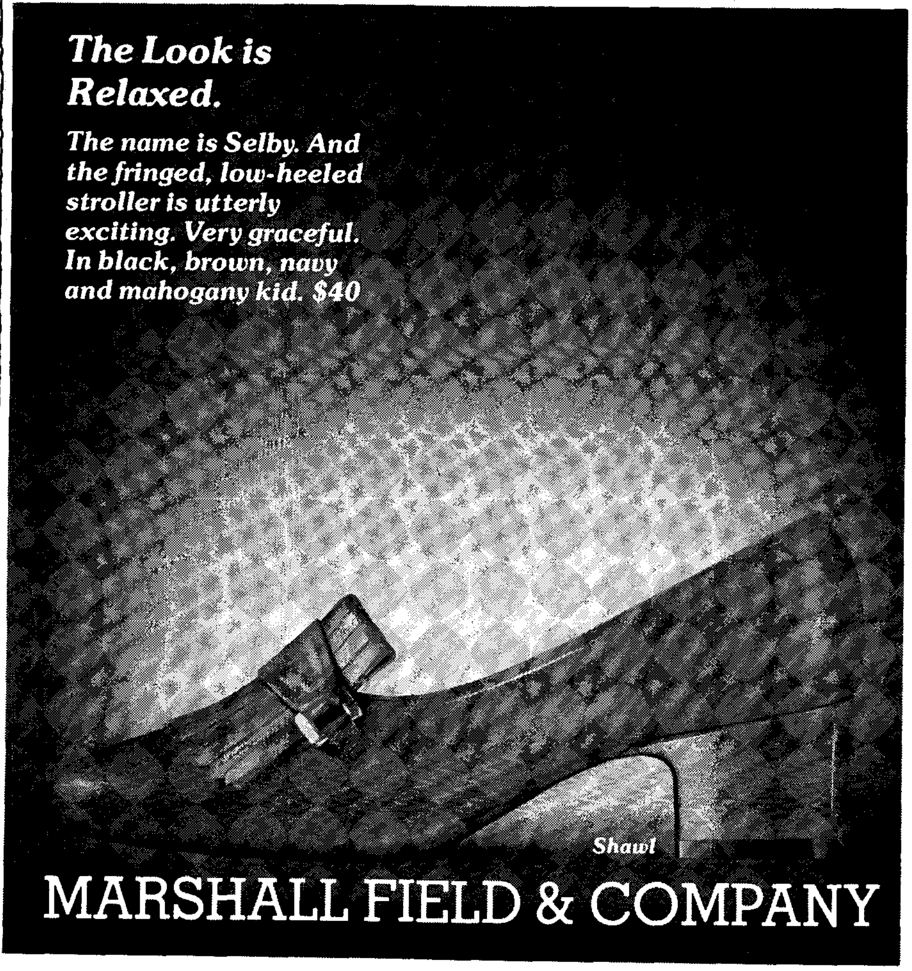
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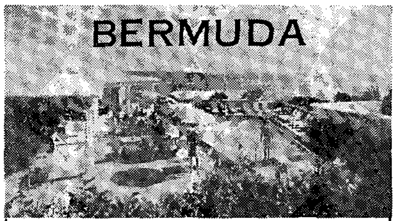

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great deal of anxiety. There had been all sorts of demonstrations, he said, and under such circumstances there was always a component that was irrational. Although there might still be considerable "disorientation and confusion" among the public concerning dioxin, the anxiety aroused was a natural consequence of a traumatic situation, and, given the situation, the returning evacuees were reacting well.

I attempted to concentrate my questions on the relative risks for the evacuees returning to Subzones A-6 and A-7 and those living in Zone B. After all, I pointed out, the people of Zone A had been evacuated well away from the zone for some seventeen months, and thus had presumably been relatively free of continuing exposure to dioxin, whereas the people in Zone B had been exposed to dioxin contamination, even if at relatively low levels, during that whole period; in view of the extreme toxicity of dioxin, might it not have been a wiser course for the authorities to evacuate a much larger area, including Zone B, for the protection of the long-term health of the inhabitants?

Spallino replied that "all aspects" had been taken into consideration in the evacuation of the population. "The social texture of the whole area would have been much more powerfully affected than it was if Zone B had been evacuated, too," he said. "When the authorities decided not to move the people away from Zone B, it was thought that it was better that way; if they had been moved elsewhere, they might not have been contaminated with dioxin but they might have become contaminated with something else." He conceded that the failure to evacuate Zone B, and the constant traffic in and out of it, had no doubt increased the mechanical transport of dioxin around the general area, but he didn't believe that that was so important. As for the findings of dioxin contamination in schools in Cesano Maderno and elsewhere in the area at the beginning of the school year, he said that the instruments used in analyzing particulate matter taken from the schools appeared to have "gone mad." He found such findings "anomalous," he said, considering the fact that "measurements taken months previously in many of the same schools showed no evidence of dioxin." Without actually saying so, Spallino indicated either that extraordinary failures in measurement procedures had been involved or that dioxin had been introduced into the schools by means other than unintentional transport. He seemed to stop just short of saying that the high dioxin-level readings in materials from the schools could have been the result of deliberate sabotage for political purposes. (Later on, when I talked with Professor Silvio Garattini, the director of the Mario Negri Institute, about the newer, positive readings for dioxin at the schools, he suggested that they could be due to improved analytical techniques. But the atmosphere of suspicion and distrust hanging over much of the scientific work was such, apparently, that even a man normally as unexcitable as Dr. Garattini could suggest to me that the possibility "must be carefully considered" that someone might have carried dioxin contamination into various schools around Seveso at the beginning of the 1977 school year "just to make confusion."

I asked Spallino about the current status of the proposal for the building of an incinerator in Zone A. He indicated that, apart from purely technical questions, the broad opposition of the local inhabitants to the idea of the incinerator made it clear that at present the scheme must be considered, for practical purposes, a dead issue.

I went on to ask Spallino about the aftereffects of the ICMESA explosion on public health and about the epidemiological findings so far.

He said that concerning the epidemiological aspects of the situation I should talk to the doctors at Desio Hospital, who would be able to provide me with the information I needed. Then, looking at his watch, he said, "I must go to Milan."

WITH the help of a scientist friend in Milan, I arranged for an interview with a group of four doctors at Desio Hospital that same evening. All were young men, but they seemed to be tired and dispirited. I told them that Spallino had suggested that I apply to them for information concerning current epidemiological studies being made in and around Seveso.

Acting as spokesman for the group, one of the doctors said that proper evaluation of the epidemiological situation was impossible. "This is a small staff here, trying its best to keep up with the clinical work to be done, and, frankly, it is not the purpose of this staff to examine the prevailing situation from an epidemiological point of view," he said. He explained that since the epidemiological committee had been disbanded and the Special Office established, the group at Desio Hospital had made repeated requests that the Special

Office provide qualified epidemiologists, without result. "We have asked for epidemiologists to be sent from Rome, but nobody has been sent so far," the spokesman said. "The Special Office has never even received any acknowledgment of a letter of request sent to Rome." As for the ten medical people who had been provided by the regional authorities to help the Desio Hospital group with the clinical work to be done among the Seveso population, both people from Zone A and people living in Zone B, only five of the ten still remained with the group. Unfortunately, the spokesman said, the Special Office, instead of bringing order out of a chaotic situation, had grown a bureaucracy of its own, which had had the effect of compounding the disorder. "Of five large programs outlined by the Special Office to deal with the problems of Seveso, the authorities have appointed a chief for only one, and that has to do with the physical rehabilitation of contaminated buildings," he said.

I asked the doctors what impression they had of the effects of dioxin on the population.

Their spokesman said that in general, except for the chloracne outbreaks among young people, there appeared so far to be no great clear-cut effects on the health of the population as a whole. Even the figures that the group had managed to assemble on the incidence of spontaneous abortion within the community appeared inconclusive, he said, but he cautioned that it was most difficult to generalize from the statistics gathered, because the study was hampered by a lack of information on abortion rates in periods prior to the ICMESA explosion; besides, many spontaneous abortions had undoubtedly not been recorded as such, or perhaps even noticed by the mothers if they occurred early in the pregnancy. He said that in view of the widespread organic damage observed in animals and the number of animal deaths one had to assume the possibility that similar damage could be done in man. He said that in one part of the affected area forty cows were being bred at the time of the accident. They had been fed grass grown in fields near the ICMESA factory, and after the accident they continued to be fed grass originating from those fields. Of thirteen pregnancies among them, there were ten spontaneous abortions, and one of the aborted calves was malformed. Of the three calves that were carried to term, only one survived more than a short time after birth. Animal deaths had

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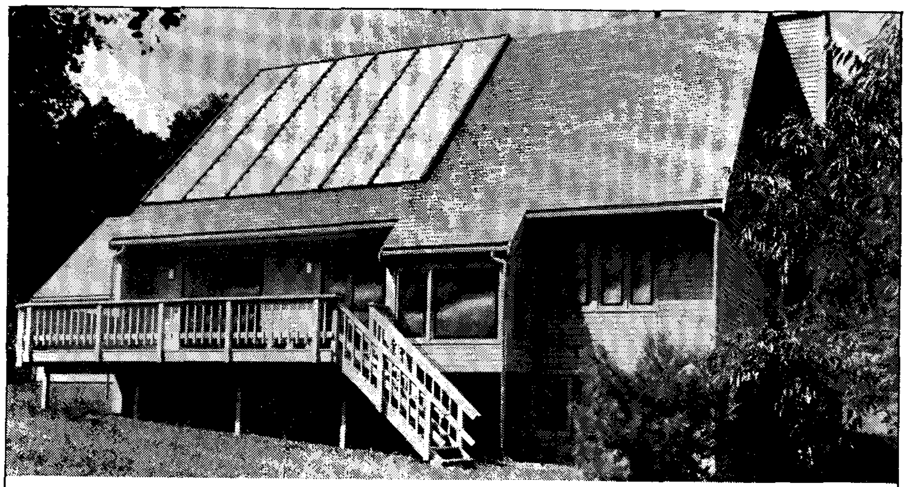

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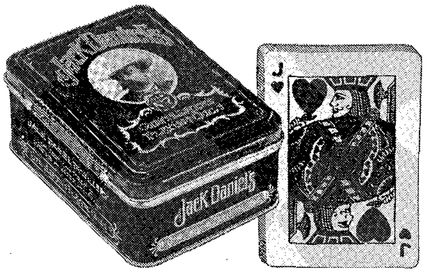

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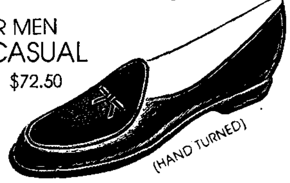

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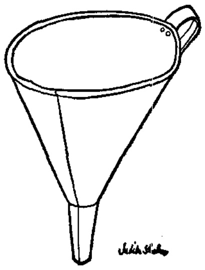
occurred as far south as Nova Milanese, he told me. He said that because of the severity of the observed effects of dioxin exposure in animals it was necessary to regard the risks to man as very serious, even though indications so far were that the actual exposure of most people in the area to dioxin as a result of the explosion must have been lighter than originally feared. "They have found dioxin in the livers of animals in the area that seemed to be healthy, so one must be cautious about potential problems among apparently healthy human beings," he said. The spokesman went on to say that adverse symptoms other than chloracne which were apparently connected with dioxin exposure were showing up among the population "here and there." For example, in one survey made of people who had been living within the upper half of Zone A and of people who had continued to live outside Zone A but on the same general east-west band, thirty-five per cent were found to have enlarged livers—a significant development, it seems, in view of the fact that liver damage is one of the prime effects of dioxin poisoning.

I said that I was interested in the opinions of the doctors concerning the possible long-term hazards to people in Zone B from continuous exposure to low levels of dioxin-contaminated material that had either been present since the accident or been transported by wind and rain and the movement of vehicles and people about the area.

The spokesman said that it was undeniable that dioxin was moving about in the area. He discussed the implications of a report by Dr. James Allen, of the University of Wisconsin Medical School, which the Desio doctors had read in Italian translation. Dr. Allen and some associates studied the effects of low levels of dioxin on nonhuman primates. In the study, eight rhesus monkeys that were fed a diet containing dioxin at a level of five hundred parts per trillion for a year became anemic and developed various toxic symptoms within six months, and then, between the seventh and the twelfth month, five of the eight died. And in another study by Dr. Allen, in which rats were fed a diet containing extremely low levels of dioxin, in the parts-per-trillion, and very low levels, in the parts-per-billion, range over a period of more than a year, almost forty per cent of the animals developed neoplastic changes—a high rate of damage that, according to Dr. Allen's report, "suggests the carcinogenic potential of the compound." The results of the Allen studies seem to suggest—contrary to the implications of the public position held for so long by Dow Chemical concerning the allegedly insignificant hazards involved in the continued widespread use of 2,4,5-T—that exposure to low levels of dioxin over a long period may turn out to be at least as harmful as short-term exposure to higher levels. Interestingly, a fairly recent study by Dow's own toxicologists on the long-term effects of dioxin introduced into the diet of rats tends to agree with Dr. Allen's findings of neoplastic changes in rats at continued low, parts-per-billion exposure, although the Dow study did not find comparable neoplastic changes occurring in the even lower parts-per-trillion exposure range. None of the Dow scientific studies appear to have changed Dow's long-standing corporate position on the safety of 2,4,5-T.

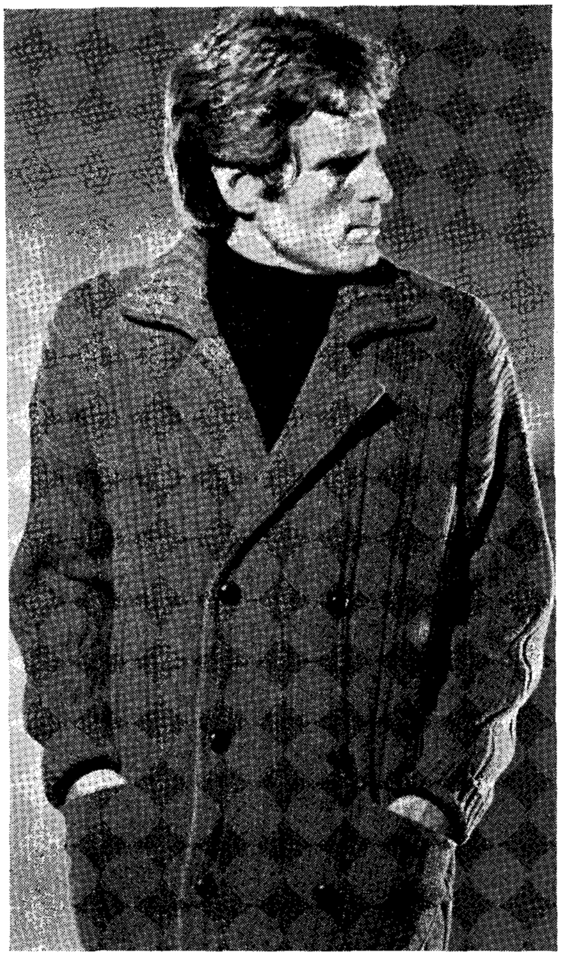
The doctors at Desio Hospital to whom I talked seemed most concerned about the implications of the Allen studies for the health of people in Zone B. "To act in accordance with Allen's findings in this area would certainly mean a vast program of decontamination, if not evacuation, but such a program runs against the political and economic situation here," the spokesman for the doctors said. Only time would tell what the cumulative effects might be. He ended our talk by declaring that the problem of dioxin was a worldwide one, and that in view of its importance it was unfortunate that "the international scientific world hasn't been involved in the problems of Seveso as it should be." He added that those trying to cope with the medical and toxicological problems posed by the Seveso accident could use all the American scientific help they could get. Hearing this, I found it painful to say what came to my mind: that the American scientific community, which has been aware of the extreme hazards of dioxin for years, hasn't even been able to prevail on the United States government to put an end to the sale or use of it or the continuing exposure of its own population to it—that, indeed, the government itself is continuing to use the 2,4,5-T herbicide in its own widespread spray programs in the United States.



Later on, I tried to supplement what I had learned from the Desio Hospital group with information from other scientific sources in Milan. I was told that, besides chloracne and liver impairment, unfavorable signs appearing on a scattered basis among the population in the area in and around Seveso included diminished white-blood-cell counts; neurological disorders of various kinds, such as blurred vision and loss of conduction time in peripheral nerve tissue; reading tiredness among schoolchildren; disturbances of the endocrine system; and disturbances in the normal functioning of the enzymatic system. I was told that one of the Seveso doctors to whom many local mothers took their children for examination, rather than to the official health-monitoring groups, was extremely concerned about a marked increase in episodes of convulsions among infants.

Since the ICMESA explosion, the birth rate in Seveso and the surrounding area is reported to have dropped sharply. Some physicians attribute this decline to the practice of birth control by the women as a precaution against bearing possibly defective children. However, Dr. Allen and his associates recently completed a third study on the effects that dioxin and related compounds have on nonhuman primates. Of eight female rhesus monkeys fed TCDD in their diet at levels of only fifty parts per trillion for seven months and then mated, four of the females conceived but aborted their fetuses, and two did not conceive, although they were mated on repeated occasions. And while all eight animals used as controls in the study conceived and gave birth to normal infants, only two of the dioxin-exposed animals conceived and were able to carry their infants to term. Such data suggest that the reproductive difficulties associated with dioxin exposure in the Allen study and the drop in the birth rate among Seveso women may be part of an over-all pattern.

As for the teratogenic, or fetus-deforming, properties of dioxin, which have been repeatedly demonstrated in animal experiments, the lack of significant data about marked teratogenic effects of the ICMESA cloud on Seveso women does not necessarily demonstrate that dioxin is in no way implicated in human birth defects. One recent development that creates suspicion in this respect is reported difficulties associated with repeated use of hexachlorophene—the antibacterial compound for the manufacture of which the ICMESA factory was producing trichlorophenol when the reactor exploded. According to the Givaudan people



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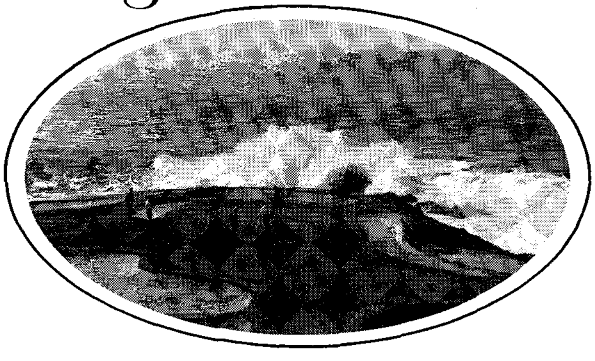

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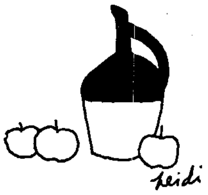
themselves in 1977, their hexachlorophene was commonly contaminated with dioxin at levels of up to twenty parts per billion. (They now say that that level has since been lowered to ten parts per billion.) While hexachlorophene has long been used in hospitals to help prevent infection, its promotion for years as a sort of miracle ingredient in such toilet articles as soap and deodorant is considered scandalous by toxicologists, and incidents of convulsions and other ill effects, including brain lesions, among infants bathed with liquid soap containing hexachlorophene in and out of hospitals led the Food and Drug Administration, in the early nineteen-seventies, to place restrictions on its use in this country except for such specialized purposes as scrubbing before surgery.



Last June, in New York, Dr. Hildegard Halling, chief physician of the Department of Chronic Somatic Diseases at Södertälje Hospital, near Stockholm, presented a paper at a symposium on environmental health hazards held under the auspices of the New York Academy of Sciences, in which she set forth the results of a six-year study she carried out on the physical condition of infants born to nurses and other female medical personnel who worked in six hospitals in Sweden. As part of the hospital hygiene, these women had washed their hands in liquid soap containing hexachlorophene as many as sixty-seven times a day, and had done so well into their pregnancies. Dr. Halling found that twenty-five of the four hundred and sixty children born to these women were severely malformed and forty-six were born with minor deformities. In contrast, two hundred and thirty-three children born to women who did not use hexachlorophene and who made up a control group had no major deformities at all and only eight minor deformities. Of course, it is possible that the soap contained impurities other than dioxin, and that these could also be implicated in the high incidence of malformations.

In any event, the association between trichlorophenol production, dioxin contamination, and ultimate hexachlorophene products and these observed human birth defects does underline the potential hazards associated with a whole chemical stew of polychlorinated phenolic products regularly found to be tainted with dioxin or dioxinlike substances. While no firm connection between the widespread use of the 2,4,5-T herbicide and birth defects among women in or around sprayed areas has yet, it seems, been satisfactorily demonstrated in the many suspicious incidents reported in this country and in South Vietnam, there have been repeated complaints by women in or near 2,4,5-T-treated areas in this country of ill effects of various kinds, including miscarriages that occurred soon after the women were exposed to drift from 2,4,5-T spray operations. A letter recently was sent to the Environmental Protection Agency by eight women who lived in sparsely populated parts of Oregon and whose homes were in or near areas that timber companies and other outfits, under contract to the Forest Service, sprayed with a mixture of 2,4,5-T and 2,4-D. The women claimed to have suffered miscarriages within weeks of spray operations during the past four years. These claims are now under investigation by the E.P.A., which a few months ago, after years of delay and inactivity, was at last prevailed upon to consider the case against permitting the continued use of 2,4,5-T in this country. Meanwhile, the manufacture and use of the herbicide continues.

In the past few months, a number of Vietnam veterans have come forward to say that during the nineteen-sixties they were exposed to Agent Orange in areas defoliated by the American military and that the exposure has led to various illnesses, including cancer. So far, no hard evidence of such a specific cause-and-effect relationship has been presented, and such a link would be difficult to establish without an elaborate study. But nobody representing the United States government has yet undertaken a systematic followup study of American military personnel likely to have been most heavily exposed to 2,4,5-T in Vietnam—for example, the crew members who loaded thousands of drums of Agent Orange aboard the C-123 cargo planes used in the defoliation operations. It is certainly disquieting to contemplate the lack of any serious attempt to ascertain the condition of such people in the light of recent reports about an extraordinarily high death rate among workers who had been regularly engaged in 2,4,5-T spray operations in the forests of northern Sweden. Nor is it less disquieting to contemplate the fact that not only has beef fat from cattle grazed on Western rangeland previously sprayed with 2,4,5-T been found to contain traces of dioxin of up to sixty parts per trillion—thus putting dioxin into the human food chain—but that samples of mothers' milk taken in the Western part of the country have also been found to contain traces of dioxin. In view of all the mounting evidence of the dangers of dioxin, the relatively light scattering of ill effects so far manifested among the population in the West tends to illustrate not the lack of dioxin's toxicity but the mysterious—one might almost say devilishly capricious—manner in which it strikes and how little is as yet understood concerning this substance.

ON Saturday, I drove into Subzone A-6. As usual, the weather was raw, damp, and misty. I parked near the house where I had interviewed Mafaldo Sartor, then walked a block west beside the grim yellow fence. Knots of residents of the reoccupied subzone were standing around in a narrow road of gleaming black asphalt which ran north and south through rows of freshly painted red-roofed houses. Most of the people were dressed in their Sunday clothes. They were waiting for the Archbishop of Milan. I joined a group of residents halfway down the street. They were in a state of subdued excitement. One of them told me that, no matter what the weather, it was a beautiful day for all of them; now that they were back home, they could feel that their difficulties were mostly over. One man told me that, considering all the circumstances, "the people say they can't complain—they've been completely reimbursed by Switzerland for their losses." Still, he went on, there was no way of completely making up to the people for what they had suffered since the ICMESA accident. Another man in the group said to me, "Before the dioxin, this wasn't an asphalt street. Switzerland finished it." He said that at the time of the explosion some of the newly constructed houses were still in an unfinished state but that "Switzerland" not only had had them cleaned but in some cases had had the unfinished work completed.

After a few minutes, there was some commotion down the street, and soon I saw a small procession. First came two red-robed, white-surpliced altar boys swinging censers, and then the robed Archbishop of Milan, wearing his red hat, with two priests bringing up the rear. The procession turned onto the street where I was standing. The spectators crossed themselves. The Archbishop, with his aspergillum, made motions of sprinkling holy

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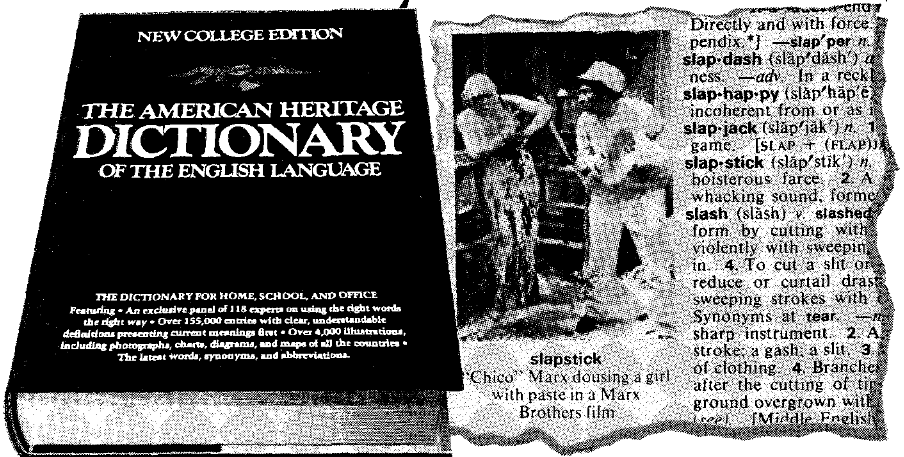
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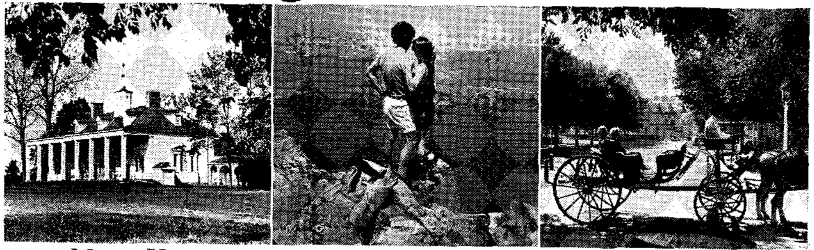

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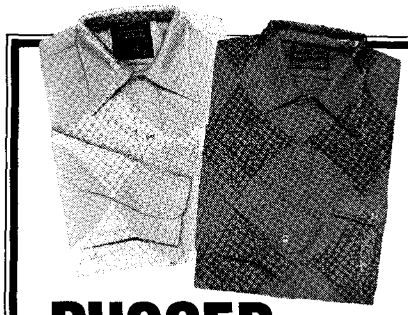

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water here and there on the new asphalt provided by "Switzerland." A few moments later, still preceded by the altar boys, he turned in at the entryway of one of the houses, where the occupants waited reverently for the blessing to be given inside. One of the two priests, going over to a blue Fiat parked at the curb, opened the trunk and took from it a small armful of plastic boxes containing crosses, presumably for presentation to the people in the households being visited.

A while after Cardinal Colombo had left one of the houses he blessed, I called upon the people inside. The place had a festive look—lots of roses and other flowers carefully arranged in vases. The house, which was solidly built, belonged to Mario Scozzin and his wife. Scozzin himself wasn't there when I entered; he had already gone back to work. He was a building contractor. Signora Scozzin was sitting in the dining room with a few friends, having coffee. She said that her husband had built the house himself, with the help of a couple of workmen, and that she and her husband had done the finishing work together. "In order to build our home, we had denied ourselves so many things, and it was so important to us," she told me. "We had been living here only two years when the accident happened. One day we felt ourselves rich and the next day it was as though we were the poorest people on earth. We saw the birds falling out of the sky, the cats and chickens dying—we'll never forget. But now we're back to our home after all these long months of misery, and we are happy again at last." She said that, remembering what she had seen, and the chloracne that some of the children had developed, she could hardly believe that the dangers of dioxin were invented, but she and her husband were not afraid for themselves or their children now that they had moved back into their home, which had been cleaned and repainted. She was a little more careful around the house than she used to be, she said. For example, she would not let dust accumulate on furniture from one day to the next, as she used to, but made sure it was got rid of quickly. Yet now she felt that they could lead a normal life.

LEAVING the Scozzin house, I thought I would wind up my visit to Seveso by stopping off at a couple of points where I might sense what people living outside Zone A felt about the current situation. I drove up to a group of apartment houses about five hundred yards west of the Zone A boundary and within the Zone of Respect, where, I had heard, there had been complaints about the lack of decontamination measures by the authorities. In an apartment occupied by the Brambilla family, I met a group of women—Signora Romilde Brambilla, together with several of her neighbors. Signora Brambilla explained that she had been unwell and had been advised by the Seveso municipal authorities to go to the seaside to recuperate, that she had gone to the Ligurian coast, near Genoa, and that her husband had gone at his own expense to join her.

One of the neighbors, Signora Maria Veneziano, informed me that after the accident the people in the apartments had told the authorities that they wanted to be evacuated from the area along with the other people. "We're all afraid of staying here," she said. "We are right on the edge of Zone A, we are right near the ICMESA factory, and we feel that it is unsafe here. We've been to the Mayor about it, and we've been to the regional authorities, and they say the dioxin levels here are low enough so we can live without worry. It's impossible! Can we be so near to the most polluted part of Zone A and have no problem?"

Another of the neighbors, Signora Lucia Buquicchio, said that since the explosion she had developed liver trouble and had had to have a kidney removed.

Signora Brambilla said that a number of the people in the apartment house had developed blurred vision, which made it difficult for them to watch television. "So many people seem to have disturbances here on the block," she said. "It's not normal at all. They get dizzy spells and headaches, and there is still a lot of diarrhea. The doctors say the people's platelet counts are very low. They have skin problems, and when they go to the sea and it's windy the itching is terrible—*un tormento!*" She said she was convinced that there were a number of people on the block who really weren't well, adding, "But they won't say anything about it to the health authorities, because they're ashamed to say that they ate fruit from the trees after the accident."

Signora Brambilla went on to say that one of the reasons the people in the apartments weren't evacuated was that pressure was put on the municipal politicians by what she called "brass hats" among the cabinetmakers and craftsmen along the road near the block, who were afraid of losing business. She said that the people on the block had not been given proper medical attention, and that they had made many protests about the way the decontamination program had been carried out. When she and her neighbors demanded that their apartment house be properly cleaned and decontaminated, she said, "the municipality said that it wasn't their job, it was Spallino's, and Spallino said he'd given money to the municipality to have it done, but, of course, it isn't being done—nothing has happened." She said there had been so many contradictory actions taken by the regional authorities that it was no wonder a great many Seveso people had stopped considering dioxin dangerous. "The authorities allowed the people to go in and out of Zone A, and take out things like mattresses, and the people brought their dioxin out with them," she said. "And when people would scold them for taking their things out of the zone they'd turn around and say, 'You don't think you have dioxin in *your* house? You have dioxin, just as we do!' "

One of the women said that she had seen the way the decontamination teams cleaned one of the schools in the area—with Spic and Span as the decontaminant. "And in the gymnasium where they had stored dead animals for a time they repainted the walls but they left the contaminated fibre matting on the floor for the kids to continue doing gymnastics on." Only a month before, she said, she and some neighbors had spotted trucks moving along the road right by the apartment building. They were transporting contaminated earth and foliage by some circuitous route to be dumped in the most polluted part of Zone A. The trucks weren't covered, she said, and were spilling contaminated material out as they went. The women telephoned the authorities to protest, but the only result was that more trucks came, whereupon the women went out into the street themselves and stopped them and turned them back in the direction they had come from.

Speaking of the situation in local schools, Signora Brambilla pointed out that although schoolteachers were listened to when they said they were afraid to continue working very long in schools in the area, when the students at the high school in Cesano Maderno—including her own great-nephew—publicly demonstrated for regular health checks for themselves, they were surrounded by hundreds of police, and people were saying things like "Those

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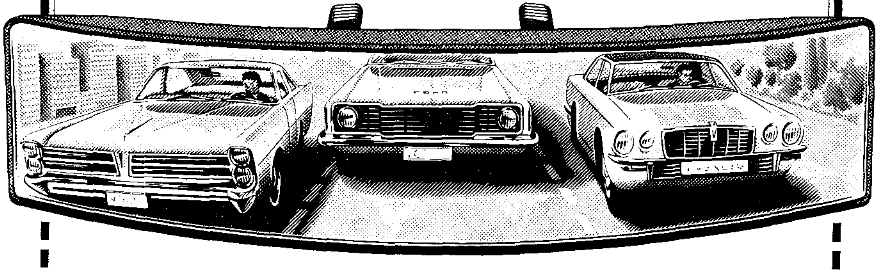

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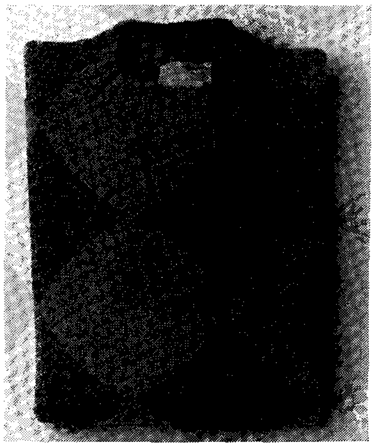

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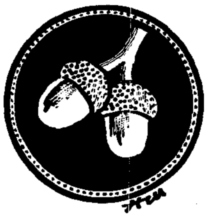
kids are on drugs!" She asked, "Isn't it a scandalous thing that when schoolchildren come to ask for blood tests three hundred armed carabinieri are brought in to deal with them?"

I remarked to Signora Brambilla that I gathered she and her neighbors hadn't attended the arrival of Cardinal Colombo to bless the houses in Subzones A-6 and A-7.

Signora Brambilla said they hadn't. "The Church has done no more for us than the regional authorities," she said. "We in this place, we're regarded like smoke in the eyes."

I DROVE southeast to a point where Zone B bordered on the Zone of Respect. There were a number of stores along the street I was travelling on. Noticing a pharmacy on one corner, I parked and went inside. It was an antiseptic-looking shop, its counter uncluttered with displays of antacid remedies, nasal sprays, and the like. A few customers were at the counter. I waited until the pharmacist, a trim-looking man in a white coat, had served them, and then had a few words with him. I told him I was interested in the community's views on dioxin contamination and on the official programs for dealing with it.

The pharmacist shrugged and said, "Apart from time's being the best and worst healer, one can say only that here, unfortunately, everything finishes in politics. This tragedy has turned into a farce. A farce of cash considerations. I suppose I'm a bit cynical about it all. What you have here is an insidious odorless, invisible poison, and people react differently to the thought of it. Some people come in and say, 'The regional authorities say you can't grow carrots. I'm growing carrots and eating them, too!' And you have people who show that they are really frightened—but they can't do anything about it."



While the pharmacist was talking, two other customers had come up to the counter, and they joined in with comments of their own. The first was a middle-aged man. "Dioxin! Since the accident, I've passed along the superstrada through here six times a day in my car, and I'm not dead yet," he said.

The second customer, an elderly woman, said, "There never was a problem. We've been living with dioxin all along. Any pollution is called dioxin. All these factories have been spitting it out for thirty years."

Leaving the pharmacy, I drove on westward, to find my way onto the superstrada and head back to Milan. A block or so away from the pharmacy, I noticed a shoe store. I parked and went in, and asked a woman who appeared to be in charge if by any chance her store repaired shoes. She said that it did—that the repair work was done by her husband, who would be there in a few minutes. I introduced myself and told her that I wondered if doing shoe-repair work in this particular area had caused her husband any concern or any problems.

The woman received my remarks as though she had been waiting a long time to unburden her mind to someone on that very subject. In an animated voice, she told me that her husband, whose name was Leonardo Puglisi, had been repairing shoes for years as part of his shoe business. She said that some months after the explosion he had become worried that repairing shoes worn by people who were perhaps tracking dioxin around on the soles might be a hazardous thing to do on a regular basis. She said that between April and October of 1977, on his own initiative, her husband had stopped repairing shoes. "He wouldn't touch them anymore." At one point, he had gone to the municipal authorities in Seveso and asked them if it was safe to repair shoes from the area regularly. She said he was told that although it was true that dioxin could be carried around on the soles of shoes, there was no great problem, and he could carry on his repair work with safety, but that if he wanted to be particularly careful he could always give the shoes brought in to him for repair a washing off with water, or even a little alcohol. She went on, "When my husband stopped repairing shoes, his customers didn't react well at all. He told them he was worried about the possibility that there was dioxin on the soles of shoes he would have to repair. The customers were indignant. They said that was a lot of nonsense. They didn't even want to think about the problem. They said to him, 'All the other shoe repairers are doing it. Why not you?' They told him that they wouldn't buy new shoes from him if he wouldn't repair them when they got worn. They said they would go to the next town, where they could get their shoes repaired at the same store where they bought them. So my husband had to give in and start repairing shoes again. If he hadn't, I think we might have gone out of business. As it was, business had dropped off badly when he stopped repairing shoes. Even now, when my husband tells people that he's careful because of the dioxin they laugh at him."

As we were talking, her husband came into the store. Puglisi was a neatly dressed man of about forty, wearing his overcoat draped loosely over his shoulders in the Italian style. Accompanying him was his teen-age daughter, Maria, an attractive girl. Signora Puglisi told her husband who I was and what we had been discussing. Signor Puglisi told me that although he had so far suffered no ill health as a result of working with shoes, he continued to be worried about the long-term effects of this exposure. He said that after the accident his wife and her mother had both developed skin rashes and that several months later his daughter had developed kidney trouble. He showed me his small workroom, which was in a partitioned-off area to one side of the store. The workshop was immaculate; there were none of the piles of leather scraps and dust usually to be seen lying about in shoe-repair shops. All his tools were laid out in an orderly way. He told me that he was careful to keep his workshop swept up, and that he put all the worn soles from shoes to be resoled in plastic bags, which were picked up by the municipal garbage collectors. He just wished he could stop the repair work altogether. "If we could sell the business and move away from here, we would. But we know we can't sell, with conditions as uncertain as they are. And I can't just stop and close up shop. This is my trade; this is what I'm trained to do."

"Now that it seems that we must stay here, what can we do to live with dioxin?" Signora Puglisi said to me. "Isn't it useless for the authorities to send old people and children away to the sea for a month? What about the people who don't get away? And what about the eleven other months, with dioxin all around you? We're from Sicily, my husband and I. From Taormina. Oh, it's so beautiful there! If we could sell the place, we'd go down there immediately. Away from here."

—THOMAS WHITESIDE

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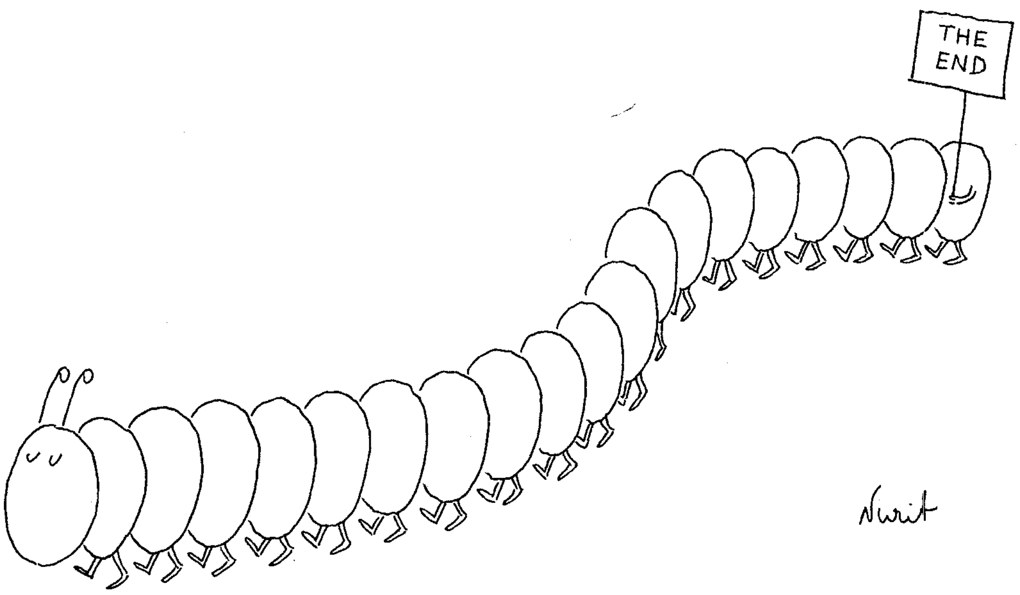
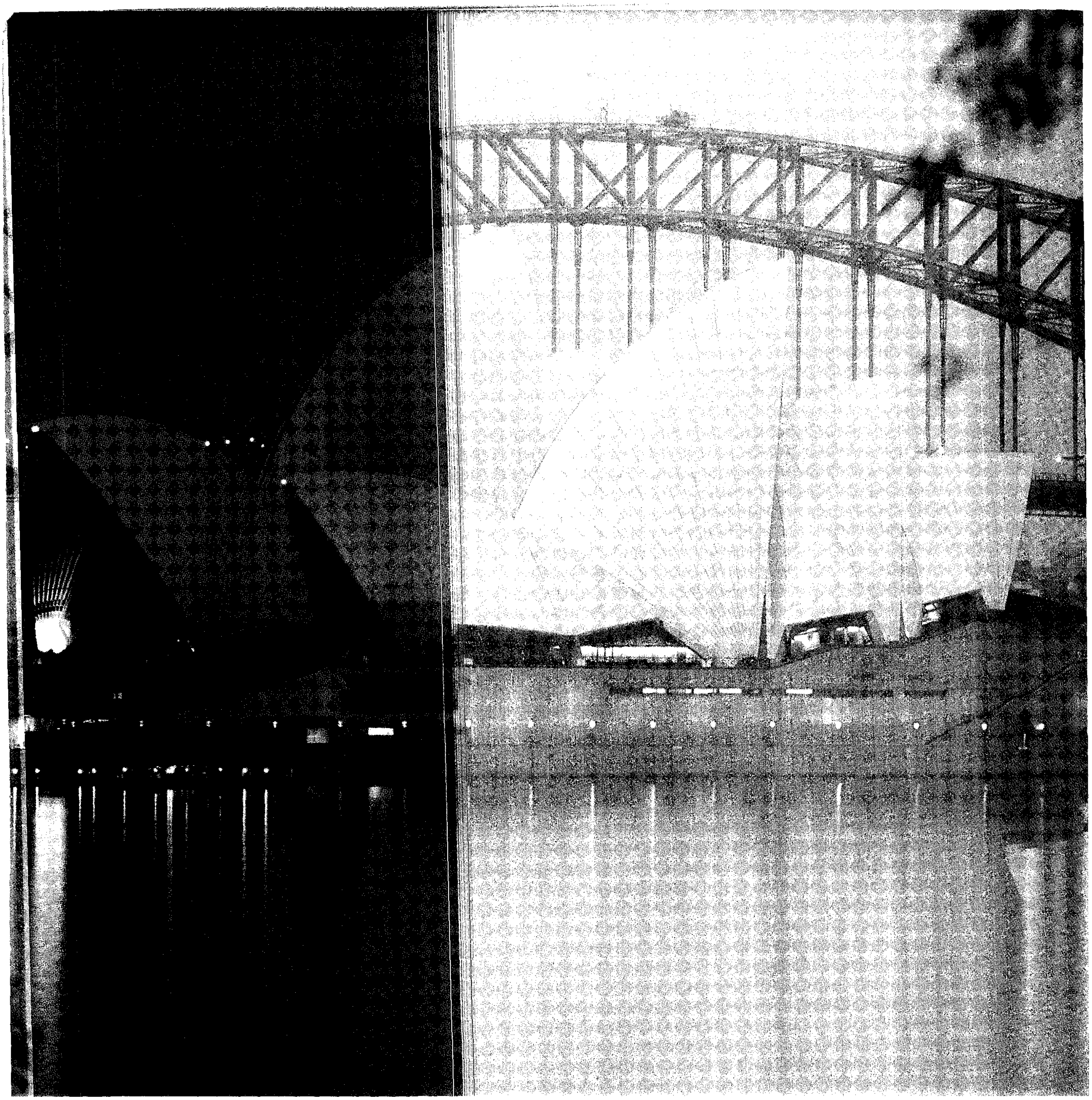
IN a little-publicized ceremony of the sort that takes place in the White House several times each month, the President on August 4th signed into law a bill that will provide financially troubled American farmers with federal loan guarantees of up to four billion dollars, exclusive of interest, over the next twenty-one months. According to a White House press release, the President announced that the legislation would "give many farmers an opportunity to refinance the debts they incurred during the past period of low prices." Four days later, in a ceremony that was variously described as a gala, a spectacular, and an extravaganza—it was held on the steps of New York's City Hall before an audience of five thousand, with musical accompaniment by the All-City High School Chorus and the 389th Army Band, and a Metropolitan Opera mezzo-soprano rendering the national anthem—the President signed a bill that will provide New York with federal loan guarantees worth one billion six hundred and fifty million dollars, including interest, over the next four years. Among other benefits that the guarantees will confer on the city, whose near-bankruptcy had more basic causes than a temporary decrease in prices for its products, is an opportunity to refinance its debt. The relative dazzle of the ceremonies was in direct ratio to the effort that had gone into getting the two bills passed. Delegates from the farm belt had lobbied for the bill that will help out the farmers, but the amount of time and energy involved was only a tiny fraction of that expended during the eight-month drive—conducted by a small army of New York City and State officials, labor leaders, bankers, financial advisers, and businessmen, many of them working almost full time—to persuade agents of the United States Treasury and the White House, and, especially, those members of congressional committees and subcommittees who had made it clear that they were either indifferent or downright hostile to the city's cause, that a federal loan-guarantee program was the only means of keeping the city from fiscal ruin. The four billion dollars' worth of what amounts to federal loan insurance for farmers will apply to their routine borrowing transactions, and will be limited by nothing like the strictures that New York City had to agree to before it was voted its much smaller amount of loan guarantees. Unlike the city, the farmers will not have their money doled out at stated intervals, with cancellation of the program possible by either house of Congress. They are not required to set up a productivity council to increase the effectiveness of their work force or to have their budgets approved by representatives of the Treasury. A state Emergency Financial Control Board will not preside over the financial priorities of the borrowing farmers (can they afford a new car or not?), as will be true of the city for the life of its guaranteed bonds—up to fifteen years. Nor did Congress limit the sources of the farmers' loans that Washington is insuring. The city's loan guarantees—something that is not generally understood—apply only to securities bought by the pension funds of New York municipal and state employees, who, as members of Congress frequently noted during their hearings on the bill, should not complain about being forced to have their pension money invested in the city, since they have such a large stake in its financial survival. Fortunately for the farmers, no one insisted (probably because anyone who did so would have been dismissed as a ding-a-ling) that the federal guarantees for farmers be limited to funds borrowed from the savings or against the prospective Social Security benefits of their hired help, who have a large stake in the farmers' economic survival.

It is no news that Washington often views it as the federal government's bounden duty to rescue rural Americans, who nowadays include many agribusiness millionaires, from the results of their having overextended their holdings or planted crops that did poorly at the market. On the other hand, it is assumed that Americans who live in big cities deserve just about anything bad that happens to them, and should suffer the consequences, so that they'll be sure not to make the same mistakes again. "It seems this body will vote 'aye' for anything with the word 'farm bill' in it," Senator Edmund Muskie, of Maine, complained during a Senate debate last spring. No one foresees the day when the complaint will be that the U.S. Senate will vote "aye" for anything with the words "urban bill" in it. This partiality doubtless reflects the continuing strength of the myth that America is still a nation of people who live on farms or in small towns—or that it should be. (Addressing a meeting of the National Association of Counties in Milwaukee a few years ago, Senator Hubert Humphrey eloquently endorsed a national growth policy that would bring "migration back to the countryside so that people can live where God intended them to live.") Also of influence in federal legislation, of course, is the fact that in the Senate, which can block any bill, the more than eighteen million residents of New York State have the same two votes as Nebraska's population of less than one and a half million, which is about two-thirds that of the Borough of Brooklyn. In fairness, figuring out what can be done to improve the lot of farmers must seem comfortingly simple to most members of Congress compared with the desperate riddle of what, if anything, can be done to turn around the South Bronx. (Certainly





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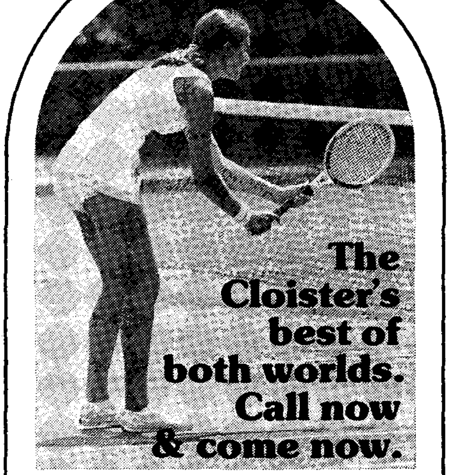
those who live in big-city ghettos can't be rewarded for plowing under a percentage of their crops. They have no crops, unless one counts the swarms of often unwanted children. And in that case not only are they not rewarded for limiting production but, thanks to the view that prevails among leaders in Congress and in the Carter Administration concerning the morality of Medicaid-funded abortions, the policy is to make such limitations as difficult and costly as possible.)

However, New York City officials have been making no public complaints about getting the short end of the stick in the matter of federal loan insurance. After all, the bill that was signed with such fanfare last month marked the first time that a city had been the beneficiary of such guarantees. The lawmakers from other parts of the country who kept mentioning this precedent in accusatory tones during the congressional hearings on the bill did not seem to be listening when New York's Senator Jacob Javits several times suggested that the one billion six hundred and fifty million dollars in guarantees proposed for this city was not unreasonable in view of the fact that the federal government already had outstanding in this fiscal year three hundred and sixty-eight billion dollars' worth of guarantees to a range of beneficiaries including the Guam Power Authority, various Indian tribes, new communities in eleven states, a number of foreign governments, and the Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Stadium, in Washington. The ease with which the bill finally got through Congress (in the House of Representatives, for example, the vote was 244 to 157, a long way from the ten-vote margin by which the federal seasonal-loan program for the city passed in 1975) probably reflected less a willingness to set a precedent than a new sense of identification with the city among out-of-town legislators, many of whose once relatively pastoral districts now also find themselves plagued by soaring welfare costs, importunate municipal unions, and other problems of a kind that they had formerly been inclined to blame New York for having brought on itself. In addition, speculation over the severe cutbacks in local jobs and services that would have to be imposed in areas where versions of California's Proposition 13 might soon be voted into law seemed to make many legislators more appreciative of what the city had endured during the last three years of retrenchment, when—as Felix Rohatyn, chairman of the state Municipal Assistance Corporation, said recently—"We have gone through our own Proposition 13." Although the legislation to rescue New York is still usually referred to in Washington as a "bail-out," many members of Congress did seem to be listening during the hearings on the bill as its supporters stressed the point that, far from losing money on the deal, the federal government had collected about thirty million dollars in the form of an interest surcharge on the seasonal-loan program, and that the loan-guarantee arrangements call for the payment of an annual fee of one-half of one per cent on the outstanding loan balance. The public lambasting of the city for its alleged sins, which legislators such as Florida Representative Richard Kelly seemed to regard as a form of recreation, was not the surefire hit this summer that it had been three years ago. Shortly before the House Banking Committee voted for the 1978 city-aid legislation, New Jersey Representative Joseph Minish interrupted an anti-New York oration by Kelly to describe the bill as "a good investment" for the federal government, and not a giveaway. "It's time to quit," he told Kelly, who did.

But if New York now has a few more friends in Congress than it had three years ago, some of its former strong supporters around the country have begun to wonder uneasily whether, having done New York one more big favor, Congress will now call that its urban program for the year, leaving other cities out in the cold. This dismal possibility was a frequent topic of conversation among officials attending recent meetings of the United States Conference of Mayors and of the National League of Cities. Their concern grew as all phases of the Administration's urban program, which had been proposed in March, remained stalled on Capitol Hill. On August 2nd, the Intergovernmental Relations and Human Resources Subcommittee of the House Government Operations Committee finally considered a Carter anti-recession proposal to provide a billion dollars in assistance for cities and communities suffering from high unemployment and other symptoms of special economic distress. After almost no debate, the subcommittee voted seven to six to postpone consideration of the bill indefinitely. At one point, the subcommittee chairman, Representative L. H. Fountain, of North Carolina, gave a supporter of the legislation five seconds to state his case. Fountain comes from Tarboro, North Carolina (pop. 9,900), and the subcommittee is dominated by conservative, largely rural legislators and has no members from this city. The tabling of the bill, which had been intended to replace an existing anti-recession program that will expire on September 30th, seemed to mean that it was dead for this session of Congress. The defeat came despite personal lobbying by the President and what was described as the heaviest lobbying effort in years by the National League of Cities and the United States Conference of Mayors. Especially dismaying to city officials around the country was the fact that many of them had already figured into their budgets some or all of the amount that would have come to them under the Administration bill. New York had counted as revenue in its current budget a hundred and twenty million dollars of the hundred and forty million it was scheduled to receive under the Carter proposal, and, calling the development "a very serious blow," Philip Toia, the Deputy Mayor for Finance, said the defeat of the proposal would mean a further reduction in the city's work force.

Fortunately, another long-established precedent has been broken by the presence of a New York delegate, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, on the Senate Finance Committee. When, soon after his 1976 election, Moynihan expressed his strong desire to be a member of that body, because it was "where the money is," he pointed out that if he got his wish he would be the first New Yorker on the committee in sixty years and the first New York Democrat in a century—an indication that "we're not being pushy," as Moynihan put it, and also that Washington's dim view of New Yorkers' money sense was no new development. Before the start of a Finance Committee meeting on the morning after the anti-recession bill met disaster in the House, Moynihan suggested that the committee try to salvage the measure, and committee chairman Russell B. Long, of Louisiana, whose state also includes a number of financially troubled localities, proposed to the meeting that there be an "agreement in principle" on such a project. The President was kept informed, and when he was visited a few days later by a delegation of sixteen mayors from such cities as New Orleans, El Paso, and Birmingham, who were depressed and angry over the lack of progress of his urban program, Carter was able to tell them that they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would be getting some anti-recession help after all. However, in the Finance Committee discussion not only was the funding provided in the bill sharply reduced but the allotment formula of the original plan was modified to accommodate the preferences of various senators, including Long and William Hathaway, from Auburn, Maine, the chairman of the operative subcommittee. Under the new bill, New York City will get not a hundred and forty million dollars but forty million. Still, that is an improvement over the big zero that had seemed to be in prospect. On August 10th, the bill passed the Senate Finance Committee by a vote of ten to five, and its supporters believe that it has a good chance of becoming law. To make things even easier for it in the body said to be ready to pass anything labelled a farm bill, Long arranged to have the urban anti-recession measure attached to an amendment to House Bill 2052, which was then awaiting Senate action, and which deals with the waiving of excise taxes on airplanes used in crop-spraying. The presumption was that if the hybrid legislation passes the Senate it will breeze through the House under a similar indulgence.

At City Hall, on the day Carter signed the federal loan-guarantee bill, it was easy to identify those local politicians who have a nice cushion of time before they must run for office again and those who, even if they are candidates in this year's elections, are not worried about the outcome. These carefree folk joined the hundreds of other invited guests in climbing up City Hall's steps and then up the curving double staircase to the second floor to shake hands with the President. The state assemblymen, state senators, and other officeholders—including several local congressmen—who are concerned about their chances in the September 12th primary or the November 7th election stayed at the rear of the crowd for a while to clap shoulders, press flesh, show off their memory for names, and often mention, incidentally, next week's fund-raiser. Among those who purposefully lagged behind, to no one's surprise, was Governor Hugh Carey, a candidate for reëlection who is still doing poorly in the general election polls. In his speech at the ceremony celebrating the federal rescue of the city, Carey managed to work in a full recital of what he regards as his considerable achievements as governor of the state and also to make grateful references to numerous local figures who are in a position to help him get out the vote or to pony up funds for his campaign. And at a quarter to seven that evening, an hour after the President had left the area, Lieutenant Governor Mary Anne Krupsak, who is challenging Carey for the Democratic gubernatorial nomination, was still standing in front of City Hall, denigrating Carey's record as governor to stray reporters and intercepting any passersby who looked as if they might be registered Democrats.

Another politician on hand for the bill-signing rite who often gave the impression of someone working the crowd was the President of the United States, who is already being referred to in many quarters as a lame-duck President, although he is less than a year and eight months into his four-year term. The impression that he was a man on the campaign trail was especially compelling because of the presence in the Carter delegation from Washington of that familiar figure from his drive for the Presidency Gerald Rafshoon, his former public-relations adviser, now called back into service. It was widely assumed here that in the eyes of Carter's handlers the big show at City Hall (which had been a White House idea, and served as public proof that the Carter Administration had succeeded in doing something for the cities, or, anyhow, for one city) was a media event intended to help reverse his long downward slide in the polls—and would be one of a series of carefully staged curtain-raisers for the beginning of his informal reëlection campaign. Their candidate, after all, knows a good deal about starting to run for an office two years ahead of time against great odds. If this was the case, it was no doubt considered a happy omen that the ceremony would be held a few score blocks south of Madison Square Garden, the site of the last Democratic National Convention and the euphoric hours of Carter's coronation there after his journey from political nowhere. At the bill-signing ceremony, there was a reminder of just how far Carter had come. Among the invited guests was that veteran on the New York political scene Paul O'Dwyer. O'Dwyer said later that when he reached the President in the receiving line Carter reminded him of the afternoon in the fall of 1975 when the former Governor of Georgia had first visited City Hall, and had stood in the rotunda looking for someone—anyone—to speak to about his race for the White House. O'Dwyer, who was then pres-

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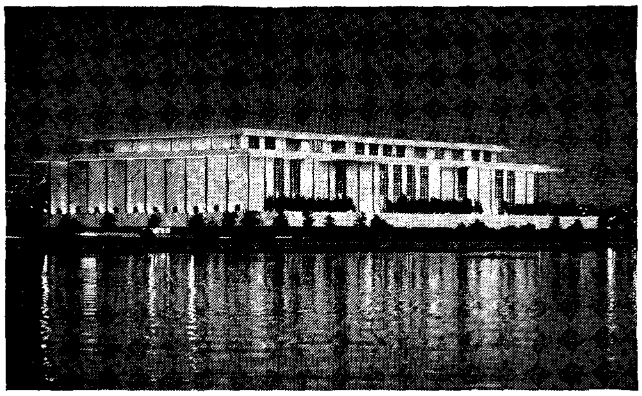

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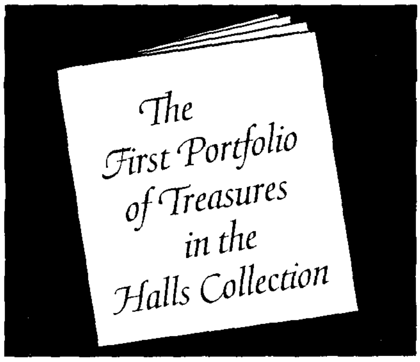
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ident of the New York City Council, and who is a kindly man, recalled that he had made an effort to round up some politicians in the building to talk to Carter but that "I just couldn't find anybody who could spare the time." (Ironically, according to the fall of the political cards, O'Dwyer was defeated for renomination last September in the primary runoff, and now, on his infrequent visits to City Hall, he is the one who often seems to be looking around for someone to talk to.) In this state's Presidential primary in April, 1976, Carter was supported by not a single major New York political figure, and took only 12.8 per cent of the vote, coming in fourth—after "uncommitted." That spring, Carter described New York as "a horrible example of gross political bossism," and told a member of his staff that he didn't feel comfortable with politicians here. They had evidently felt the same way about him. Last month, however, every politician at City Hall had time to spare for Jimmy Carter.

Mayor Koch later sent a memorandum to his staff saying that the President had told him at the end of his visit that the city's welcome was the warmest he had ever received in this country. Certainly Carter's recent reception was warmer than the one he was given on his last appearance here—in October, 1977, when Koch, not yet elected mayor, met him on his arrival at the Wall Street heliport and handed him a letter denouncing his policy in the Middle East. Although Carter had clearly been very angry at the time, at the beginning of his City Hall speech last month he mentioned the incident in amiable tones, and, on cue, like a vaudeville performer, Koch stepped forward and handed him another letter, which Carter read aloud. Its message was "Mr. President, New York loves you. Sincerely, Ed Koch." As it happened, it was a day when the word "love"—that recurrent reference of Carter's Presidential campaign (". . . and as filled with love as are the American people"), which, as President, he has seemed shyer about using—was mentioned a second time. "We *love* New York," said Carey, invoking the title of the state's popular musical commercials, "but today, Mr. President, we *love* Georgia." Carey also said fervently, of himself and his fellow New Yorkers, "We will never forget you, Mr. President," and Koch assured Carter, "We won't let you down." Politically translated, these vows could have meant that they would get out the New York vote for him if he was a candidate for reëlection as President. It is not at all certain, however, that even if both Carey and Koch are in office in 1980 they will be able to deliver on these pledges, or that they would deem it in their political interests to do so. When the eighteen members of the city's delegation in the House of Representatives fought Carter earlier this summer on bills that he had made clear he considered critical to the nation and to his own prestige, they were reflecting the deep anger over important aspects of Carter's foreign policy among New York's very large number of Jewish voters and the smaller but also assertive number of local Greek-Americans. Despite the city's great need for Administration support in view of Congress's generally unhelpful approach to urban legislation, New Yorkers on the House International Relations Committee were the driving force behind the "resolution of disapproval" the committee sent to the President, deploring as pro-Arab his Mideast fighter-plane package, and members of the delegation did everything they could to block the bill in the House. All but three of them then voted against the bill to lift the Turkish arms embargo, a measure fiercely opposed by those sympathetic to Greek Cypriots. When legislation on the two issues reached the Senate, both New York senators also opposed Carter on the two bills. These events at the Capitol suggested that the effective collaboration between the New York congressional delegation and the Carter White House on the loan guarantees might be a one-shot affair. The Administration's performance on that legislation may have been staunch and skillful, but the jokes about the President's ineptitude and fuzziness on domestic issues, and also those about his poor chances for reëlection, have been as popular here as anywhere.

Shaking hands with the hundreds of invited guests at City Hall last month, Carter seemed quite at ease, and looked as if he had overcome his onetime qualms about New York politicians. Among the guests were a large number of local officials, most of whom nowadays are first- and second-generation descendants of immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe (including many of those whom the man from Plains called "Eyetalians" in his Madison Square Garden acceptance speech). Also on hand were representatives of such politically influential local blocs as Hispanics, blacks, and Orientals, as well as bearded Chassidic Jews in their long black coats and black hats. However, there was a strong suspicion that the warm welcome that Carter felt New Yorkers had given him may just have reflected the fact that, now that American Presidents, with their huge entourages and constant access to television, have turned into superstars, people here, like those in supposedly less sophisticated places, get a kick out of seeing close up and touching any visiting White House incumbent. No great sense of rapport with Carter seems to have developed in this city during his time in the White House, although New Yorkers, with their motley heritages and street-wise ways, have in common with redneck, born-again Southerners the experience of having been scorned by their fellow-Americans. Particularly in the rather snobby view of Anglo-Saxon Protestants in other parts of the country—an element that, despite its diminishing percentage of the population, still heavily dominates the national judgment of who's in and who's out—both New Yorkers and redneck Southerners have generally been looked down on for being "different," talking funny, making unseemly noise about whatever they do, following strange gods or else following the right god in strange ways, and, on occasion, publicly using the word "love." In his City Hall speech, Carter tried to establish a basis for a feeling of fraternity between the two looked-down-on groups. Mentioning the dislike of New York in many parts of the country, he said, "I know how New Yorkers feel about that. One thing that Southerners and New Yorkers have in common is that at times we've both had to deal with regional prejudice." He even resorted to the local vernacular, as, smiling more broadly than ever, he said of Governor Carey, "He is what we Southern Baptists in Georgia call a real mensch." And, plainly alert to the political perils of sounding too much like Lord Bountiful, he suggested that the federal loan program for the city was only a fair trade-off. "When people in my part of the United States needed support for programs like rural electrification and economic development, New Yorkers gave us that support," he said. The bill, he also told them, was an expression of "mutual concern and a spirit of coöperation."

It is a spirit of coöperation whose continuation is as vital to Carter politically as it is to the city. In as narrow a victory as that in the last Presidential election, almost any bloc of voters can lay claim to the credit, and therefore the rewards, of having made the difference. Since November, 1976, there has rarely been an editorial on Carter in a black publication which has not declared that he owed it all to American blacks. Within days after the election, representatives of Hispanic groups and of Polish-American organizations also claimed responsibility, and, for that matter, so did President Idi Amin, of Uganda, who said that, having endorsed Carter, he had insured the President-elect's victory by winning for him the votes of "blacks and white revolutionaries." Until almost the end of the primary campaign, Carter, who in his successful campaign for the governorship of Georgia had run against Atlanta's big-city slickers, had kept telling political rallies, "I'm a country boy." But it was not the voters from the farm belt who put him over in 1976. Outside his native South, his support came from voters in Midwestern and Northeastern states, as any election map will show—and, particularly, it was the voters in the big cities of those states who turned out for him. He won New York State by 288,767 votes, but the result would have been different if the city hadn't given him a margin of 716,717. Although a combination of the electoral votes of other states, such as those of Ohio and Hawaii, could also be said to have given him his twenty-seven-vote margin in the Electoral College, this state's forty-one electoral votes were the largest bloc that went for Carter. For accidental reasons, the New York returns came in late on Election Night, and thus, in a teetering race, the report of his victory here served as the signal that he was almost certainly the next President. Carter's judgment was to give New York credit. In the early-morning hours, after New York was finally assigned to the Democratic column, he put in calls to Governor Carey and to the then mayor of the city, Abraham Beame. (What he said to Beame was, "Abe, I love you.") Immediately afterward, he also made grateful calls to three of the local Democratic county bosses, whose gross domination of city politics he had denounced a few months earlier.

When two political elements badly need each other, it is a good bet that they will find a way to work things out, as Carter and New York's clubhouse politicians demonstrated in 1976. The hope here is that when the President shifts more of his attention from

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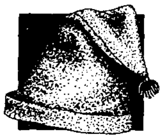
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foreign affairs he will devote to legislation of concern to this city and other cities the same degree of arm-twisting effort that he has given to bills involving defense and foreign policy. (Governor Carey said boldly during congressional hearings on the loan-guarantee bill that in his opinion "this is more important than the Panama Canal.") The prospect that, for their part, New Yorkers in Congress may find ways to be a little more accommodating to the President (who hasn't said "I'm a country boy" in a long time now) received some encouragement a couple of weeks ago when Manhattan Representative Charles B. Rangel, who had opposed the Carter bill deregulating natural-gas prices, because he didn't see any advantage to his constituents in lifting the price controls, was persuaded in White House sessions to vote in favor of the bill. Carter, along with Secretary of the Treasury Michael Blumenthal, whom New York officials came to know and trust during the negotiations on the loan-guarantee bill, and Federal Reserve Board Chairman G. William Miller, had argued with Rangel that defeat of the bill would deeply affect the value of the dollar. Although the bill is by no means law as yet, Rangel's vote in a House-Senate conference provided the Administration with the winning margin among the House conferees and, along with two changed votes among Senate members of the conference, gave this major aspect of the President's energy program its first solid chance for passage and what a Washington *Post* front-page headline called a "Big Carter Victory." James A. McClure, of Idaho, one of the two senators who succumbed to White House persuasion and switched his vote, had secured a promise from the President that, in return, the Administration would reconsider its opposition to the nuclear breeder-reactor program, which McClure favors. The immediate joke around Washington was that the White House would express its gratitude to Rangel by giving him a breeder reactor in his district, which essentially consists of Harlem and part of the upper West Side. A breeder reactor would not be a popular addition there, but it is assumed that New York will be suitably rewarded in one way or another. —ANDY LOGAN

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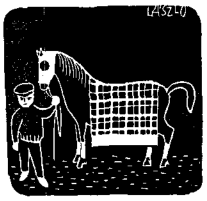
THE RACE TRACK

General Assembly's Hopeful



BERTRAM FIRESTONE'S General Assembly, a son of Secretariat, ran a blazing race at the close of Saratoga's record-breaking meeting last Saturday to win the Hopeful Stakes by six and three-quarters lengths. Only six two-year-olds ran. Calumet's Tim the Tiger was a last-minute scratch, after injuring himself in his stall. General Assembly, a big chestnut colt who resembles his sire greatly, got off badly, but he gained ground quickly and overtook the leader at the top of the stretch, after which the result was never in doubt. Ken Opstein's Exuberant came in second, and the Greentree Stable's Fuzzbuster was third. The time for the six and a half furlongs was 1:16⅖. The victory was a popular one; the crowd of 27,160 had made General Assembly the favorite, and he paid $2.60 to win and, curiously, the same price to place, with $2.10 to show. It was his third victory in three starts. The race grossed eighty-one thousand dollars, and was worth $48,600 to the winner. It was originally framed as the prep race for the Futurity, and it still fulfills that purpose, since General Assembly looks to be the favorite for the eighty-ninth Futurity at Belmont Park, on September 9th.

On the eve of the Hopeful, Joseph M. Roebling's Palm Hut, the winner of the Schuylerville Stakes on the opening day of the meeting, won the Spinaway—the Hopeful's opposite number for fillies. Taking command shortly after the start, she finished a comfortable length and a half ahead of Louis Lee Haggin II's Himalayan, covering the six furlongs in 1:10⅗. Golferette was third.

The art dealer Daniel Wildenstein's French-bred filly Waya ran a very fast nine furlongs to win the $55,400 Diana Handicap, for fillies and mares, the Monday before the Hopeful. Carrying 115 pounds—ten less than Pearl Necklace, top weight of the twelve who ran—the four-year-old daughter of Faraway Son out of War Path by Blue Prince raced Pearl Necklace down in the stretch to win by two and three-quarters lengths, doing the distance in 1:45⅖, to equal the track and world records for the distance, which were

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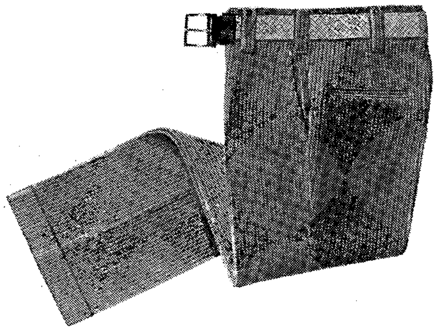

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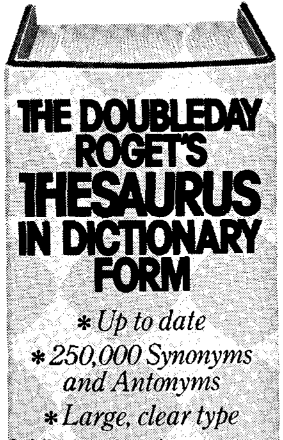
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set back on August 10, 1973, by a runner named Tentam. The turf course was unusually fast, because of the long dry spell.

NOW there is talk of a match race between this year's and last year's Triple Crown winners, Affirmed and Seattle Slew. No less a person than Louis Wolfson, the owner and breeder of Affirmed, has spoken about the possibility of such an event. It is said that the race would be run at Churchill Downs this fall and would have a purse of a million dollars, which would put the runners almost in the class of Muhammad Ali. Long before the Travers, there had been rumblings of such a match, and some indication that television would be interested in it financially.

Needless to say, the talk of horsemen in the paddock last week was almost entirely about the Travers and the disqualification of Affirmed. I have neither the inclination nor the space to set down the ramifications of that affair, but here are a couple of opinions. Louis Wolfson, after he saw the film patrol's slow-motion version of the race, said that the stewards were perfectly right in disqualifying his horse, and that he regretted the incident's having spoiled as great a race as he had seen in many a day. Steve Cauthen, who swept through the Triple Crown on Affirmed and would have had the ride in the Travers if he had not been injured in a spill ten days before, watched the running from Wolfson's box. "Pincay rode Affirmed good," he said afterward. "There's crowding in every race every day, but I thought Pincay rode good." Of course, Affirmed and Alydar will meet again—most probably in the three-hundred-thousand-dollar Marlboro Cup Handicap at Belmont on September 16th. Wolfson is said to favor this race. —AUDAX MINOR

•

This is a stern Calvinist world in which Hester Prynne with her scarlet letter would feel at home. Its theology, mandating the subjugation and isolation of women, derives in part from words in the Korean asserting that "men are a degree above [women]."—*Washington Post.*

By the way, what's "A" in Korean?

•

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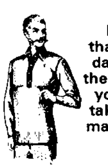

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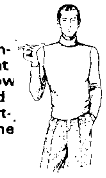

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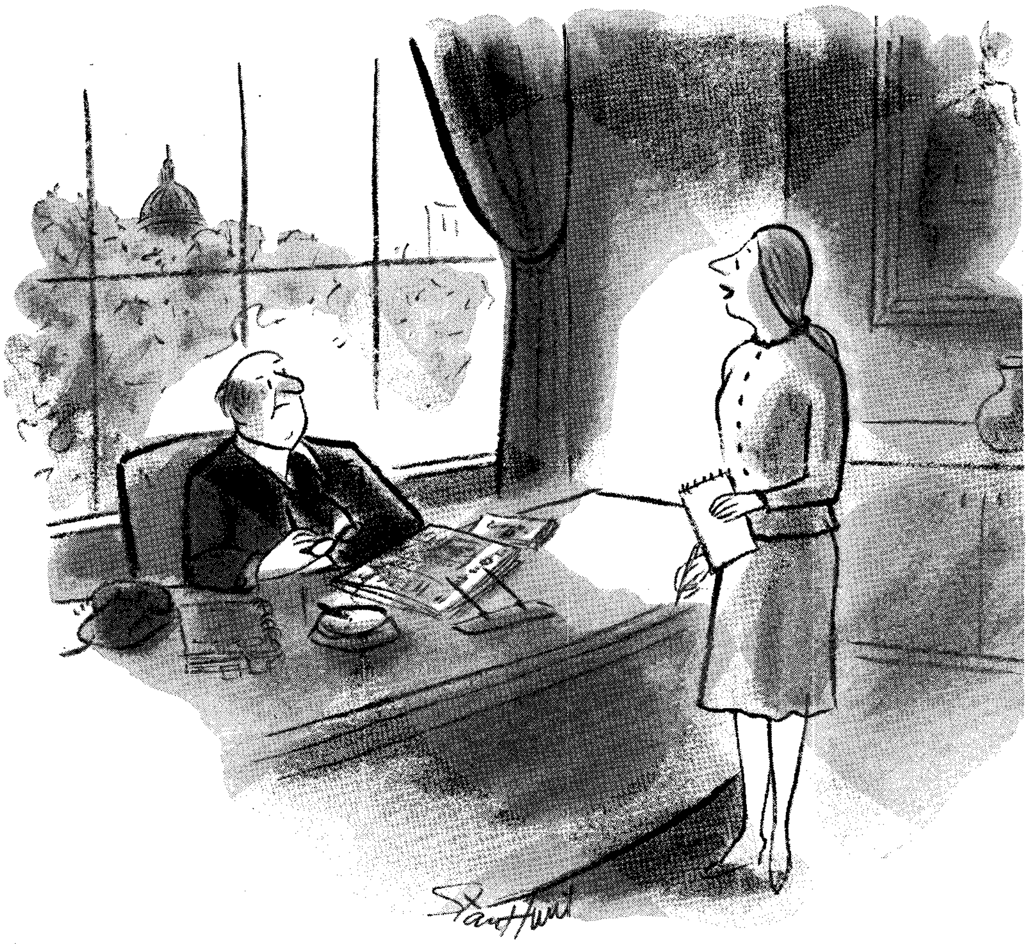
THE CURRENT CINEMA

Din

SLEEP is the place where the most ragged can walk in good repair. I take it that this is something of what Karel Reisz's "Who'll Stop the Rain" is about. It is stocked with a populace of beings made somnolent by drugs, drink, fear, shell shock, who gather the tatters of their outward lives around them as if the scraps were robes. We see people out of control jolting from one bruising collision to another. Everywhere in the film, there are junkies, freaks, hippies: men and women of small mind who seek—deludedly—to enlarge the reach and discernment of their damaged thought by heroin or liquor. Anything to stop the rain, says the film. The rain is not, as it seems to be at the beginning of the film, the rain in Vietnam, which must have made the real jungle warfare seem to the combatants even more aberrant than our minds as spectators told us that it was. It is the rain of noise that this civilization allows to drip so insistently onto our skulls. In this film, racket is everywhere. Reisz has deliberately exaggerated the sounds of cars revving up, car hoods being dropped in impatience, car radios being switched on as soon as the ignition key is turned. Throughout the film, there are shots of people drinking from flasks or smoking dementedly in the illusory solitude and dignity that alcohol and nicotine can offer. Standards have vanished. People speak moronically, drink straight out of bottles, eat with their hands while food slops down their chins, bash each other about as if they were characters on television while actual television sets are playing loudly in empty rooms and telephones are ringing all over the house. These people—our paradigms—live in cacophony. It is their own fault, and they wildly curse the nonexistent single person who started it. There must be a secret of repose and solitude somewhere, they seem to be saying desperately to themselves. Reisz gives us one quick shot of a man at a glum bar, with glum harpies dancing—well, moving—in the background. Another man, alone, is biting a thumbnail. It is as if he were trying to untie a knot in his life with his teeth.

The actual plot of the film is simple to the point of pulpdom. It comes from an excruciatingly poor novel called "Dog Soldiers," by Robert Stone, which for some reason won a National Book Award. The subject is drug-peddling in America by people in the shadow of the Vietnam war. The screenplay is also by Robert Stone—with Judith Rascoe—but Reisz has transmuted the topic, though the story is still nominally about the smuggling of heroin into this country from Southeast Asia. We are in a world of rather elderly-looking flower children, chilled gurus, foolishly dressed women who pop pills. The female star is the appealing Tuesday Weld. She gives a disarming performance, though why she is made by the costume designer of the film to wear a tasteful and uncreased brown caftan when she is hiding out in New Mexico one can't imagine. The male leads are played with anonymity by Nick Nolte and Michael Moriarty, but their flatness is one of the points that Reisz is making. His subject here is not character. A soft-spoken, decorous naturalized Englishman born in Czechoslovakia, with a droll and charitable sense of humor, he has proved himself to be more than capable of directing actors to portray defined behavior. (He made "This Sporting Life," "The Gambler," "Saturday Night and Sunday Morning," "Morgan!," "The Loves of Isadora;" his start in film-making came with a bang in 1956 in England with "Momma Don't Allow," directed in collaboration with Tony Richardson on a grant from the British Film Institute as part of what developed into the historic Free Cinema program. He is also the author of what has become a classic, "The Technique of Film Editing": he cuts in his head while he shoots, as he must be doing in "Who'll Stop the Rain," whose supervising editor was John Bloom.) The nonverbal sounds in the movie are often at screech point, and we want to turn the level down, but what we are hearing is no more than what a schoolchild hears after automatically switching on the television to a Western while he or she is doing homework. Perhaps with a considerable sense of the absurdities of film financing, and certainly in a mood of seriousness, Reisz has slipped to us under the barbed wire, in the guise of an adventure thriller, a fine film about the rising temper-



"Shall I issue that as a simple denial or as a categorical denial?"

ature of delirium in a society that voluntarily soaks itself in stimulants and soporifics and, most of all, in random noise.

WHAT makes Burt Reynolds so popular? His "Smokey and the Bandit" was the second-biggest moneymaker of 1977. With his hairy chest and his dark mustache stencilling the only particular marks on an otherwise characterless upper half of the body—not that the swaggering legs have much character, either—does he perhaps symbolize in the public mind some unspoiled territory west of the sophisticated Eastern Seaboard? If so, the American public is being fobbed off with a nullity.

In Reynolds' new film, "Hooper," directed by Hal Needham, he plays Hollywood's top stunt man. The film starts off spectacularly. Hooper bandages himself carefully against damage, to bullfight music. He seems in love with his body. One starts to think that this film is going to show us an American equivalent of the physical grace and bequeathed beauty of the work of the Spanish bullfighter. In a scene near the beginning of the film, he rides a motorcycle on its side and at high speed under a moving tractor-trailer, and then rides over a car, to be thrown into the air and land with dapperness. From then on the screen seems to be full of set-up scares that bob like the fruit in a slot machine: bodies being hurled around, men letting themselves down skyscrapers on ropes that may break, chariot races with wheels churning very near flesh, hauls across heights. The situation is that Hooper's preëminence is being contested by a younger man. Hooper has a bad back, for which he is given jabs of a painkiller. The fatuous and spoiled young director of Hooper's film-within-the-film, Roger Deal (Robert Klein), is set up as a character whose strength of ambition runs at odds with the flab of his creative instinct. He seems stoppered: his drive has no outlet. He promises to be a fascinating character, but he is never developed. In this scene of the opening stunt, he is sparse with praise and with explanations to Hooper of how the stunt fits into the story. He feels that the "creativity" should be left to him. As the sun sets, Hooper goes back to his girlfriend, whom he carries—with agony for the audience, considering his back—into the bedroom, in a frolicsome humor that is not contagious.

This is a Mack Sennett world, but it is one where falls hurt, where wounds last. Pain isn't gone in the

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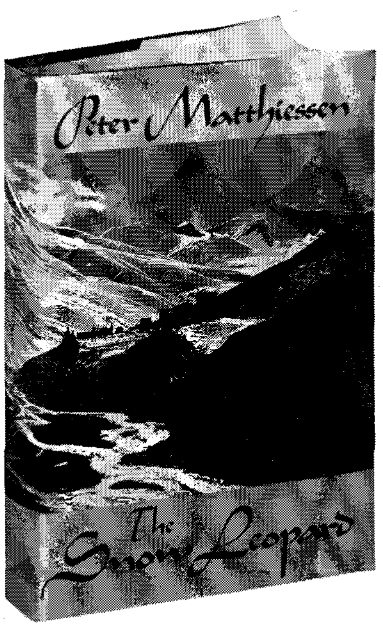
next shot; actions have repercussions, often unhappy ones. "Hooper" thus runs contrary to the bedrock rules of slapstick and of circus humor. Hooper himself, in character and actions, implies "Love me for my vulgarity" instead of "Love me for my dexterity." What a comedown from the mannerliness and the poetic physical skills of Buster Keaton. The film survives on calculated popular appeals: anti-doctor jokes, love of dogs (Hooper aggravates the injury to his back in a fall in which he is preventing a jolt to a dog), anti-cop jokes, sentimentality about film stars in extraordinary jobs having everyday emotions. ("Don't you ever have the feeling that you want to have a baby?" his girlfriend's father asks Hooper. "Yuh, all the time," he says.) It survives on an ethos much like that of the Western: the ethos of swaggering down Main Street and daring anything. "I never turned down a gag," says Hooper. "I wanted something to put on my tombstone," agrees an older stunt-man friend. The stunt man's reason for being—at least, as it is stated in "Hooper" and applauded in theatres throughout the country—is made to sound attractively homespun: this taciturn man wants to prove that, in the words of his more voluble young competitor, "a man can do just about anything he puts his mind to." That recalls the statement so often made in Westerns, that "a man does what he has to do." But there is one enormous difference. Westerns are about a world of bravery and isolation which once actually existed, however fabled it has become. "Hooper" is about Hollywood, which has always been a fantasy land. The film is trite, and it is extravagant; in fact, it takes us to the point where extravagance is triteness. And what are these things that are being extolled, these things that the ideal man can execute if only he puts his mind to them? Nothing of distinction or direction. The ambition is strong but at sea—it could as well nurture a would-be pickpocket or assassin as a would-be stunt man—and this is the mark of "Hooper" 's hero. The popularity of Burt Reynolds' characters is a phenomenon worth pondering.

—PENELOPE GILLIATT

•

TOKYO—The reduction of Japan's trade surplus with the United States hinges on the reduction of Japan's trade surplus with the United States, U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce Frank Weil said Monday.—*Ithaca* (N.Y.) *Journal.*

Well said, Assistant Secretary of Commerce Weil!



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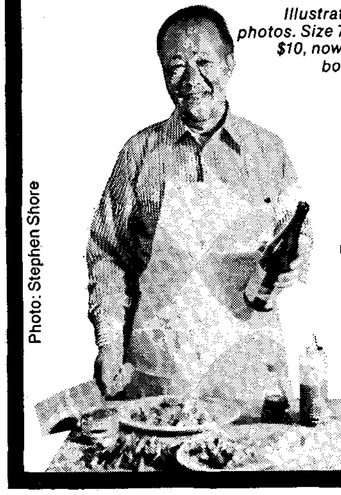

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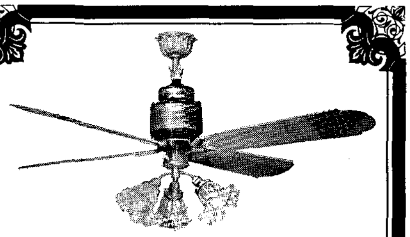

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BOOKS

De Profundis

THE exactions Alexander Solzhenitsyn makes of his clandestine readers in the Soviet Union (how many are there?) and of his vast Western public have a shrewd ferocity. He knows and despises the readiness of sympathetic response in his Western audience, the vaguely prurient appetite for distant suffering. It is not so much we who read Solzhenitsyn as it is he who reads us. As Tolstoy was during his later years, so Solzhenitsyn is a searcher-out, a harrier of men's debilities, and an embarrassment to the world.

Solzhenitsyn, a theocratic anarchist, has little esteem for reason, particularly when it stems from the "intellectual," from the man who makes his more or less mundane living by dispassion. In the presence of the inhuman, reason is often a small—indeed, a laughable—agent. It can also be subtly self-flattering, and Solzhenitsyn plays harshly on the facile "objectivity" of those who would argue with him, who would try to be "reasonable" without having been exposed to even a millimetre of the archipelago of pain. What has historical analysis to say in the presence of Solzhenitsyn's own sufferings and the cry he has sent through modern history? Each indignity visited upon a human being, each torture, is irreducibly singular and inexpiable. Every time a human being is flogged, starved, deprived of self-respect, a specific black hole opens in the fabric of life. It is an additional obscenity to depersonalize inhumaneness, to blanket the irreparable fact of individual agony with anonymous categories of statistical analysis, historical theory, or sociological model-building. Consciously or not, anyone who offers a diagnostic explanation, however pious, or even condemnatory, erodes, smooths toward oblivion, the irremediable concreteness of the death by torture of this man or that woman, of the death by hunger of this child. Solzhenitsyn is obsessed by the holiness of the minute particular. As happens with Dante and Tolstoy, proper names cascade from his pen. He knows that if we are to pray for the tortured dead, we must commit to memory and utter their names, by the million, in an incessant requiem of nomination.

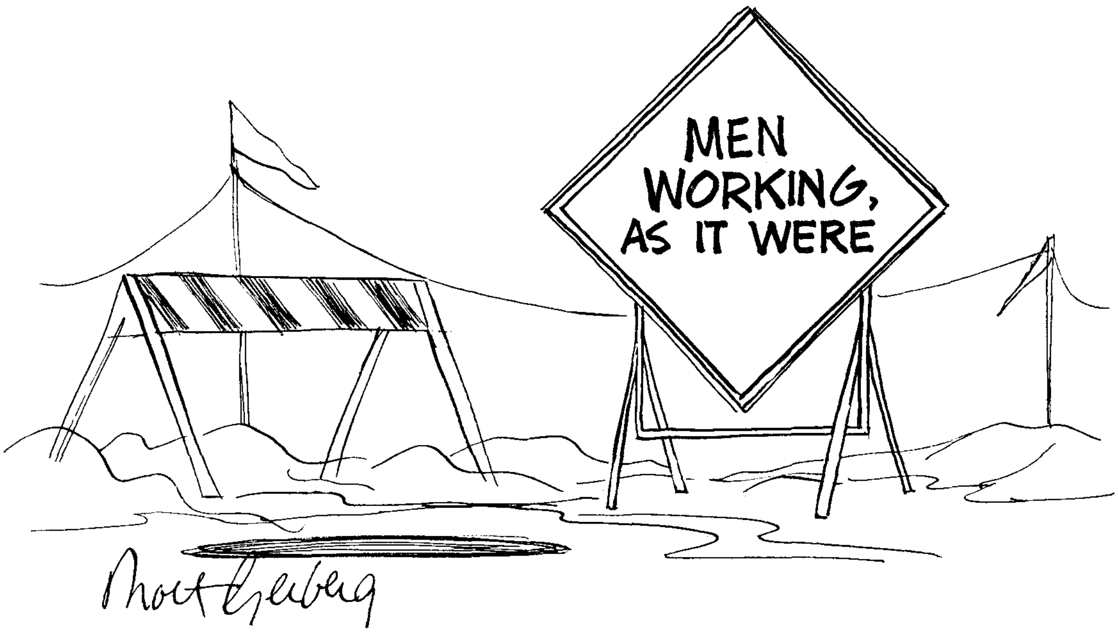
But the mortal mind is so constructed that it cannot contain, in genuine individuation, more than a thimbleful of known presences. At least twenty million men, women, and children were done to death in the Stalinist purges. If we possess a vivid inward perception, we can visualize, we can number, and, in some measure, we can identify with fifty persons, perhaps a hundred. Beyond that stretches the comfortable limbo of abstraction. So if we are to understand at all we *must* try to analyze, to classify, to put forward those reveries of reason which are called theories.

It is a platitude older than Thucydides that in the exercise of political power the human species can and will turn to bestiality. Massacres have punctuated the millennia with strident monotony. The routine treatment of slaves, of familial dependents, of the crippled or the crazed in epochs and societies we now look back to as of eminent artistic, intellectual, or civic splendor is such as to numb the imagination. Oases of compassion were few and far between. (Hence the Christian promise of a compensating Heaven.) No one really knows whether or not grass did grow again where Genghis Khan had passed; there was no one left to look. Throughout large stretches of Central Europe during the Thirty Years War, there were only wolves left to devour the wind.

But there *was* an Indian summer, a relative armistice with history, in the luckier parts of Western Europe and the United States during much of the eighteenth century, and again between the close of the Napoleonic wars and 1914. The constant of savagery lay in the hands of specialized professional armies and had been exported to the frontier or the colonies. Voltaire was not a naïve utopian when he foresaw the disappearance of torture and mass reprisal from political life. The signs were positive. General Sherman's Hunnish tactics looked like an isolated, embarrassing atavism.

It is the Armenian massacres of 1915-16 that are at once pivotal and problematic. Were they, as some have argued, a nightmarish epilogue to a long history of "barbarian" invasion and ravage, a throwback to the world of Attila? Or were they, as others contend, the opening of the age of holocaust and genocide? And what, if any, are the psychological and technical links between the deliberate murder of one million Armenians by the Turks and the exactly contemporary hecatombs on the Western front? Whatever the diagnosis, the overwhelming fact was that political, nationalist man, equipped with unprecedented weapons, had remembered or rediscovered the logic of annihilation.

It is according to this logic that we have conducted our affairs since. The logic has entailed the insanity of mass homicide from 1914 to 1918 (almost three-quarters of a million at Verdun alone), the eradication of civilian sites and peoples, the planned poisoning of the natural environment, the wanton killing of animal species, and the Nazi murder of Jews and Gypsies. Today, this same logic entails the cold-blooded


MEN WORKING, AS IT WERE
Mort Gerberg

eradication of native tribes throughout Amazonia, the ubiquity in Uruguay and Argentina of a degree of torture and terror which matches anything known of Stalin's thugs and the Gestapo. Today, at this minute, it is a logic that underwrites the suicidal bloodletting in Cambodia. The Gulag has no real borders.

This is not to diminish by one jot the specificity of Solzhenitsyn's reports from Hell. But it is to ask in what ways the Soviet edifice of servitude and degradation is or is not a segment of a more general catastrophe. Solzhenitsyn himself is not clear on this issue. The first two volumes of the Gulag chronicle contained crassly peremptory asides on the distinctions to be drawn between Nazi and Stalinist practices. Solzhenitsyn made much of the (undoubted) truth that Stalin had slaughtered many millions more than had Hitler. (At full tide, as Robert Conquest has shown in his classic studies, the Soviet camps comprised some eight million inmates.) Solzhenitsyn even advanced the supposition that the Gestapo tortured to elicit the "facts," whereas the Russian secret police tortured to produce false witness. No such vulgarities mar this third volume, "The Gulag Archipelago Three" (Harper & Row; $16.95), but Solzhenitsyn remains undecided as to where and how the Gulag fits into the texture of Russian history and of the Russian temper. At some points, he voices the belief that oppression from above and obeisance to brute authority by the great mass of the population characterize the Russian spirit. But at other points he hammers at the specifically Bolshevik nature of the regime of terror, a regime initiated by Lenin, brought to lunatic efficacy by Stalin, and continuing in madness today on a less apocalyptic scale. Solzhenitsyn frequently and sarcastically contrasts the relatively benign deviltries of the czarist punitive apparatus (as reported by Chekhov or Dostoevski) with the consuming bestiality of the Soviet solution.

If Solzhenitsyn were to be asked whether the reversion of modern political man to mass torture, incarceration, and murder represents some general phenomenon, or whether each instance is an appalling singularity, he would, I imagine, say something like this: When mankind rejected the true meaning and urgency of Christ's example, when it turned to secular ideals and material hopes, it severed its history and political institutions from compassion, from the imperative of grace. A politics or a social bureaucracy divorced from theological sanction has within it, ineluctably, the mechanics of nihilism, of self-destructive wantonness. The Gulag-planet, the ubiquity of torture and homicide in our public existence, is only the most dramatic, the most shameless manifestation of a pervasive inhumanity.

It is this theological-penitential reading of man's condition which underwrites the most eccentric but also the most deeply felt of Solzhenitsyn's dogmas: his detestation of secular liberalism as it flows from the French Revolution; his distaste for the Jews, in whom he sees not merely the initial refusers of Christ but the radical libertarians whose restlessness culminates in Marxism and utopian socialism; his contempt for the "degenerate hedonism" and conspicuous consumption in Western societies; his undisguised nostalgia for the theocratic aura of Orthodox—almost of Byzantine—Russia.

This is an isolating, often maddening set of theses. It has against it an alliance, at once ludicrous and, to Solzhenitsyn, entirely natural, of the K.G.B., Mrs. Jimmy Carter (*vide* her attempt to rebut Solzhenitsyn's tirade at the Harvard commencement), and the Swiss tax authorities seeking to take their tithe of the royalties of their recent guest. Conjoined, these beliefs of Solzhenitsyn make for a "mystical" explanation of modern barbarism. It is an explanation that is, by its very nature, impossible to prove or to deny. But is there a better one?

Many have tried to find one. The late Hannah Arendt strove to locate the roots of modern totalitarianism in certain definite aspects of the evolution of the encompassing nation-state, and of the quality of economic and psychological collectivism after the Enlightenment. Others have seen in the concentration and death camps a final enactment, at once logical and parodistic, of the industrial processes of assembly lines and standardization. I have put forward the "working metaphor" whereby the erosion of God's presentness from daily life and from the legitimacy of political power generated the need to institute a surrogate damnation on earth (a Hell aboveground), this surrogate being the Nazi, the Soviet, the Chilean, and the Cambodian Gulags. But none of these hypotheses are really explanatory. What we are left with is the central fact: In a way and on a scale inconceivable to educated Western man from, say, Erasmus to Woodrow Wilson, we have reverted

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to or contrived a politics of torment and massacre. From this fact cries out the only question that matters: Can the infernal cycle be stopped?

Solzhenitsyn, who has survived not only the Gulag but the cancer ward, is animated by a raging will. More, perhaps, than anyone since Nietzsche and Tolstoy, he is mesmerized by and master of the boundless resilience of the human spirit. His answer would be: Yes, it is possible to stop the juggernaut; it is possible to repudiate the banality of evil and to say no to those who would reduce one to a worker in the slaughterhouse. He would say—or should do so in the blaze of his own vision—that the United States could halt the genocide in Amazonia, the sadistic circus in Argentina, the degradations in Chile by withdrawing from these grotesque regimes the investments, the corporate interests, on whose largesse they operate. Solzhenitsyn can and must proclaim that the automatism of oppression can be arrested, because he has seen it arrested or, at least, ground to temporary impotence in the pits of Hell itself.

This is the testimony of the final volume of the trilogy, with its enthralling record of camp uprisings, of escapes, of defiance by individuals and groups of victims. Solzhenitsyn records the forty magnificent days and nights of the revolt of May and June, 1954, in the Kengir camp. He tells the tale—it is a classic narrative—of Georgi P. Tenno, virtuoso escaper. In poignant closing chapters, he recalls his own resurrection from the house of the dead, his own reëntry, at once agonizing and joyous, into the habitual daylight of more or less normal, licensed existence.

Yet this colossus of a man, so markedly a stranger to common humanity, does not end his epic in consolation. After nine years of clandestine writing, Solzhenitsyn closes his trilogy on the grim notice that a century has passed since the invention of barbed wire. And he, who has seen, lived, recounted the utmost of resistance, of hope against Hell, implies that it is this invention that will continue to determine the history of modern man. There is in the blackness of this great fresco no touch more desperate.

—George Steiner

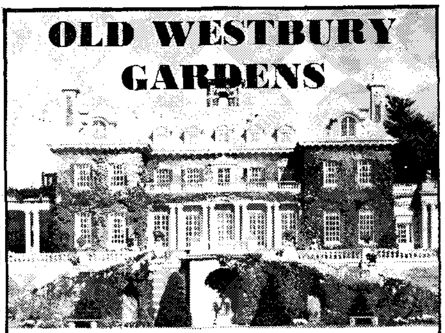
BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

A Good School, by Richard Yates (Delacorte; $8.95). The setting is a third-rate New England prep school that caters to the ill-made boy of modest financial means. The novel spans three years during the Second World War, as the school skids into bankruptcy, its pupils stagger toward maturity, and the war begins to claim its graduates. We watch about a dozen of the boys grow less and less ugly and odd as they move up through the forms, tormenting, insulting, and befriending one another. Some of the most popular or promising of them are killed in the war or turn out to be duds. Most of the teachers are ruined by the school's collapse, and their various personal troubles suggest that everyone there has been cursed from birth with exceptional bad luck—except for a clumsy and tongue-tied kid who becomes editor of the school paper (and, the reader is led to believe, happens to be the author). Mr. Yates manages to fit the minimal dialogue of adolescents into a graceful and articulate narrative, and his portrait of group mediocrity is affectionate, witty, and wry. A Book-of-the-Month Club selection.

Neglected Lives, by Stephen Alter (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $8.95). A short first novel of unusual and exquisite quality. Mr. Alter was born (in 1956) in India, of American missionary parents, and was educated there and at Wesleyan University, in Connecticut. It is India that provides the setting here. His India, however—the India he has chosen to observe—is one that has rarely been seen in print. This is the tragicomic world of the Anglo-Indian, that doomed remnant of the British Raj who is English in every respect (in name, in language, in culture) but color—the telltale shading that sets him apart from every neighbor. The story is episodic, and is told in several voices: a young student dispatched to a dying hill-town resort to escape the fury of the family of a Hindu girl with whom he has had an idyllic affair; the retired brigadier-general friend of his family who takes him in and remembers his own young years, uneasily passing for English in the Egypt of the Second World War; the brigadier's wife, who remembers and continues the tea and scones, the gin-and-lime, the badminton and memsahib prattle of her youth; a rich young friend of the student's whose response to his lineage is a retreat into gluttony. Mr. Alter has a rare narrative zest, a surging feeling for the physical

OLD WESTBURY GARDENS



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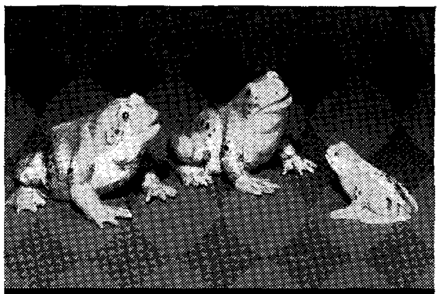

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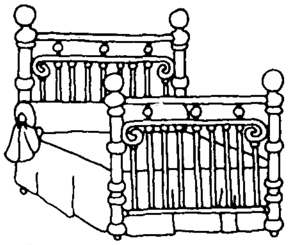

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GENERAL

Across the Years: Memories of a Virginian, by Virginius Dabney (Doubleday; $10). The author was the editor of the Richmond *Times-Dispatch* from 1934 to 1969. He has won a Pulitzer Prize and written several well-reviewed books, and now has produced one of the least self-centered autobiographies imaginable. Mr. Dabney tends to make his achievements read like happenstance, and prefers to write about family, friends, travel, historic events he has witnessed, great men he has met. He explains his attachment to his native state: his experiences show only the pluses of regional loyalty, such as the chance for intimacy with local people (the novelist Ellen Glasgow) and the likelihood of having greater influence as a native son. To be sure, Dabney was not invariably influential; he thought up a modest scheme to begin desegregation in 1943 but could not persuade white Virginians to try it.

The Decoration of Houses, by Edith Wharton and Ogden Codman, Jr., *with introductory notes by* John Barrington Bayley and William A. Coles (Norton; $14.95). Before Mrs. Wharton found the assurance to become a novelist, she made herself a connoisseur of applied art and, in collaboration with Mr. Codman, an architect who also worked as an interior decorator, published this, her first book, in 1897. The work is permeated by aesthetic passion, but, because it is addressed to American millionaires of an era before the income tax, and offers rooms from European palaces as models, its application is limited. The reader can almost see and feel the flashy discomfort in which the robber barons lived, intimidated by their bric-a-brac. And all through the book crackling sentences tell us that Mrs. Wharton's future was to be literary, not domestic.

Note: "The Snow Leopard," Peter Matthiessen's account of a journey by foot into northwestern Nepal, has been published by Viking ($12.95). Some of the contents originally appeared in *The New Yorker*.

MYSTERY AND CRIME

McGarr on the Cliffs of Moher, by Bartholomew Gill (Scribners; $8.95). McGarr is chief inspector of detectives of the Irish police, and the cliffs of Moher are where the body of May Quirk was found. May, dead of a pitchfork wound, was a local girl (County Clare) who had gone to New York and become a top investigative reporter on the *News*. What was she doing back in Ireland? Was she on the track of another big story? Would it have something to do with American financing of the I.R.A.? McGarr (whose third recorded adventure this is) is the sort of man who asks the right questions and manages always to be in the right (and often risky) place, but he also has an endearing insouciance: on the way to intercept a vital piece of evidence, he gets a sudden craving for broiled mackerel with hot mustard sauce, and stops to buy a dozen mackerel from a homing fisherman. And he can admonish a dangerous suspect, "Keep your sly, foul eyes on the wall, Doctor." This is a cheering (and not uninstructive) diversion.

Love Kills, by Dan Greenburg (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; $7.95). There is a kinky young out-of-work actor in Manhattan who goes around stalking and studying and then confronting and killing pretty, young unattached women, because his love for them takes that passionate form. We meet him at the scene of his first "affair" and follow him unimpeded through four others, until he makes the mistake of selecting a girl who is both clairvoyant and the friend of a homicide detective. Mr. Greenburg's inspiration for this macabre thriller is, of course, the "Son of Sam" reign of terror, but that ghastliness is no more than a seed: the book is entirely his own. He has thought it plausibly, brilliantly through, and has created not only an attractive young hero and heroine but also a revoltingly believable monster.

•

On such occasions, Carter displays a flair for handling tough questions and gives articulate responses. He also has a chance to project his personality and at times displays a quick sense of humor, which does not come across in his prepared address) zg u46i,o0,t and making ba-ba-ba noises by the porch, flee around the corner of the white building and the screen door slaps open and pow-pow-pow across the wooden floor comes the woman called Horse.

—*Port Jervis (N.Y.) Union-Gazette.*

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